THE PAPER A MAN ENJOYS

The Modern Man

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF MASCULINE INTEREST.

No. 2. [PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY.] WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 14, 1908. ONE PENNY.

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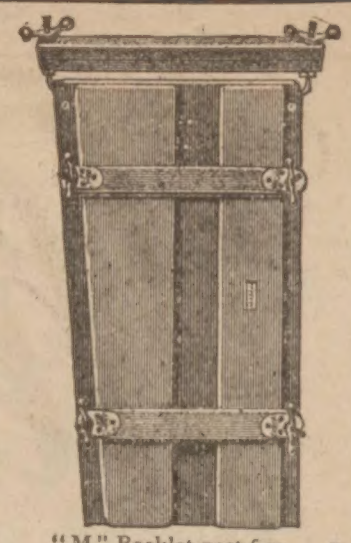

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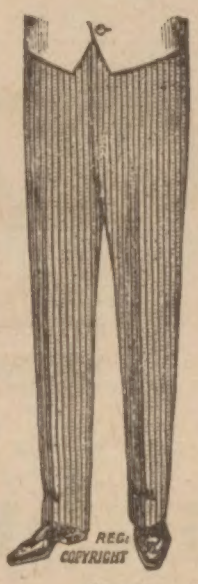

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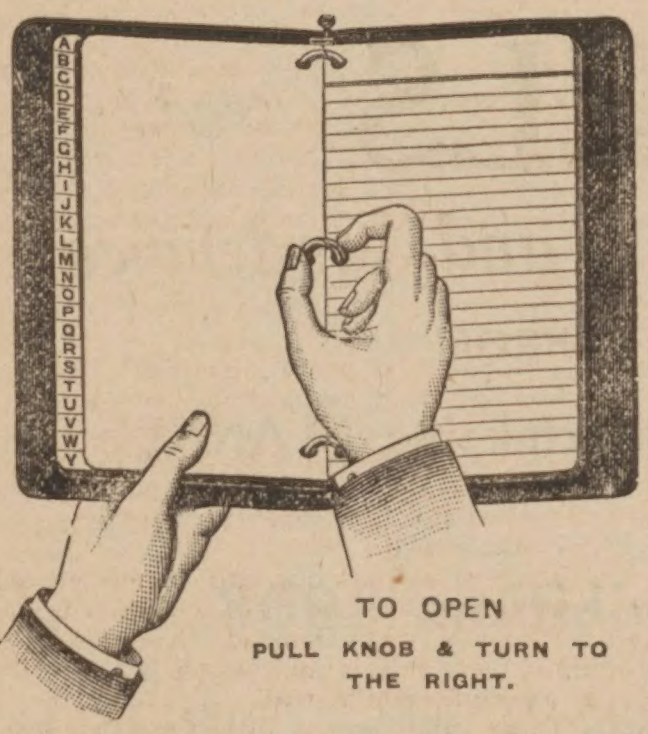

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The Modern Man

I dare do all that may become a man. Who dares do more is none.—MACBETH.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF MASCULINE INTEREST.

No. 2. WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 14TH, 1908. ONE PENNY.

EXCUSABLE LIES.

Truth alone wounds.—NAPOLEON.

I had a young friend once who was ruining his health with too much study. His father had died a consumptive, and it did not require much insight to prophesy that he also would presently fall a victim to the scourge unless he mended his way of life.

So I persuaded him to take an interest in sport—a thing he had never done previously—in order that he might be weaned to some extent from the books that were slowly killing him. As a beginning I invited him to come round to my lodgings occasionally for half-an-hour with the gloves. He was more awkward with them than anyone I have ever seen, and it was often all I could do to check myself from laughing outright.

After the sixth lesson he asked: "Am I doing any better?"

Without waiting to think, I answered: "Yes. You were a bit smarter to-night."

"I'm glad of that," he replied. "I was beginning to think I should never be any earthly good at athletics, and I had made up my mind that if you didn't see any improvement to-night I'd throw up the whole idea."

As a matter of fact, I hadn't seen the faintest sign of improvement. On the spur of the moment, and to avoid hurting his feelings, I had lied, but I believe excusably.

When last I saw him he was leaving for a Government post in India and was much stronger than when he first took up athletics. His letters inform me that his health is now of the best, and I cannot overcome an inclination to be thankful that I lied to him.

Then there is Jenkins who presses me to come in and have a chat with him whenever I am his way. He is a wretched bore, and talks nothing but politics, a subject in which my interest is limited to a week before election times.

One evening business takes me to his quarter of the town. As I am returning home I meet him face to face.

"Hallo, old man!" he says. "Delighted to see you! Come in and have a smoke."

To tell him that nothing short of being dragged by wild horses would induce me to cross his threshold, would be to offend him mortally, and his enmity would injure me in business. So I tell him that I may be able to come some other evening, but that to-night I am rushing off to keep an important appointment.

Which, again, is an absolute lie.

The ultra-good advise you on such occasions to tell the truth, but in such a way and with such concealments as shall convey a false impression.

This is mere footling nonsense. You do not tell the truth unless you let the other man know all that is in your heart, and the concealment of the truth is just as much a sin, if sin it be, as telling the peace-making lie.

If everybody told the whole truth, our entire social structure would collapse. M. BRUCE.

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THE HUNTSMAN.

The neigh of a horse to me, of course,
Is music of sweetest strain,
And the eager cry of a hound hard by
To me is a glad refrain.

The merry beat of my hunter's feet
On the turf as he speeds along
Keeps livening time to the ringing rhyme
Of my rollicking hunting song.

My eyes are bright, and my heart is light
As the mist amongst the trees.
There's never a care for my soul to bear;
Let sluggards take their ease.

So I'm off and away for a joyous day
As the hounds their music peal,
With a careless crack of my whip at the pack,
And a dig of the rowelled heel.

The winds may howl and the thunder growl
Or the breezes may softly moan.
A huntsman's life is a royal life,
The saddle a kingly throne.

And my jolly song speeds the hours along
As I think of my sweetheart true,
With the golden hair, who'll be waiting there
When the cottage comes in view.

PATRICK DONNELLY.

SPORTING PRETENDERS.

You meet the bogus athlete everywhere—in the train, in the tea-shop, in the office, and the factory.

He may be spotted in a moment, for he brags. The real sportsman never does that, because in the enjoyment of his particular recreation he is bound to have met many men who are infinitely more expert than he is, however smart he may be. If he is indeed a champion in his own line, then he is too strong a man to boast.

The trouble with the bogus athlete is that he won't hold his tongue. If his appearance annoyed you, you could look at something else; but you can't close up your ears, at least, not conveniently.

If he is a stranger, you must, of course, tolerate him till the first opportunity occurs of getting out of earshot; but if he is in the same place of business as yourself you will be compelled, sooner or later, to show him up, and the sooner the better.

That way alone lies peace.

Supposing he brags about physical culture and cold baths and dumb-bells, your best plan is to challenge him to the performance of some simple feat in his own line, such as lying flat on his back and then sitting up without bending his knees. Ten to one he can't do it.

These experiments are safe, because you can be all but certain that he is no good at what he brags about; if he could do things he wouldn't boast.

The scheme is the same throughout. If he brags about his knowledge of football, just have a glance at the morning paper and then ask him some searching football question. He fails ignominiously, no one in future will listen to him, so he dries up and peace is restored.

CENTRE OR SIDE?

A HAIR-SPLITTING PROBLEM.

The other day I saw in an illustrated paper portraits of some railway guards. Each was in civilian clothes without a cap, and a more unprepossessing set of men it would scarcely have been possible to imagine.

Yet the railway guard in his uniform appears dignified, austere, even handsome. What is the explanation?

An examination of the pictures referred to convinced me that it lay in the manner in which these men dressed their hair. When they have their caps on the traditions and fashions of their class in the matter of hair dressing are concealed from public view, but without the cap, and especially when these men trim themselves up to face the camera, you see the result of their taste in all its crudity.

In every case the hair was long and combed low over the forehead; in several instances it was parted in the middle and curled against the brow in little twists. With their hair properly dressed they would doubtless have looked quite as well as the average; as it was, they were a long way below par.

Custom is everything in the matter of hair dressing. Some years ago it was the habit for men to wear the hair long. Now the general custom is to keep it short. It is more cleanly worn so, for then the head can be washed with as little discomfort as the face. The popularity of all forms of athletics has doubtless had much to do with the change, for the man who sweats wants to wash his head, an operation which is convenient only when the hair is short.

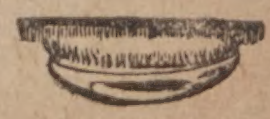
Besides these utilitarian advantages, I think short hair in a man looks best.

There is an absurd prejudice against parting one's hair in the centre. This has been railed against by many writers as a sign of effeminacy. Their error can most readily be demonstrated by a reference to certain of our well known public characters whose tastes are anything but feminine. Lord Kitchener parts his hair in the centre, and it does not detract from his appearance. It must be noted, however, that he always wears it short; it is when long hair is combined with the centre parting that the effect is effeminate.

A new style of parting has recently been introduced—a sort of compromise between the centre parting and the old side divide. It is, as one might say, a three quarter parting coming halfway between the centre of the head and the line of the usual side parting. It suits some men uncommonly well.

Most of us part our hair at the left side and brush it towards the right. This is because we are mostly right handed. Very frequently it improves a man's appearance to part his hair at the right side instead.

Those who have a little time to spare when doing their toilet might experiment with the different styles I have enumerated. A change may alter their appearance, but that is a happening which would not be disadvantageous to the great majority of us. H. B. IMPY.



Driving.

A LESSON IN A MANLY ART.

The man who imagines he can ride but cannot, soon finds out his mistake when he gets on a horse; but the man who believes he can drive though he really knows nothing about it, may go on driving for days and weeks before he finds out what an exhibition he is making of himself.

Every Sunday afternoon, when those who are the happy possessors of traps disport themselves and their families therein, one may see examples of gross incompetence at the reins. And yet it is all so simple. The following hints tell you all you need to know, and a moderate amount of practice will enable you to use them with that ease and lack of effort which one may always observe in the competent horseman.

SEE TO THE HARNESS.

Before getting into the trap at all, see to it that the harness is correctly adjusted. If one trace is longer than the other you cannot expect your horse to go as nicely as you would like.

In this connection I should advise all drivers to carry with them, besides the necessary pocket-knife, some stout string and a piece of strong wire. The driver like the motorist is always liable to have an accident, and the most frequent mishap is the snapping of some portion of the harness. One mend may best be done with string, another with wire, but if you have neither and are far from a house your plight will be unhappy.

Before mounting the vehicle take the reins in your hand. Some men have them handed up to them by the coachman or boy who looks after the horse, but this plan is dangerous.

Many an otherwise well-mannered animal will, when fresh from want of exercise, make a sudden dash when he feels to his delight that the time of starting has at last come. He knows as well as you do when you have taken your seat, and if he accepts that as the signal for starting you will be powerless to stop him. If you are in a trap without having hold of the reins you are at the horse's mercy.

Never allow the horse to start till you give the signal. Wait till you have adjusted your rugs and made yourself comfortable before you tell him to move.

HANDS AND THE RIBBONS.

The restlessness of a horse when he feels that someone has got into the trap is frequently due to the folly of the driver in tightening the reins as soon as he takes his seat; the horse backs and generally misconducts himself. And who shall blame him? Hold the reins, but leave them slack till you actually want the horse to move.

The left hand is for the reins, the right for the whip. Pass the first and second fingers between the reins, so that the near or left one is between the thumb and the first finger, and the off one between the second and third. The end of the reins are gripped to the palm of the hand by the third and fourth finger.

The right hand must hold the whip between the thumb and the palm, so that the fingers are left free to assist the left hand with the reins when necessary.

In turning to the right, for example, you would slip the fingers of the right hand over the off rein, bearing upon it to the desired extent; in turning to the left the near rein will be taken by the first and second fingers of the right hand.

Never on any account pull the off rein out of the left hand. The right hand is to be used only in turning, and nobody except a coster thinks of driving with a rein in each hand.

The reins having been taken in the right way in the left hand, the elbow must be kept to the side and the forearm bent in front. The wrist also should be bent inwards to insure the fullest elasticity. The feet should be just a little forward from the line of the knees, and the toes should not touch the dashboard.

The whip should be held pointing to the left shoulder so that the lash will not touch the face of anyone sitting behind you. If you put the whip in its bucket, be careful to coil the lash about the stick, as otherwise it may annoy your friends on the rear seat.

EASE COMES WITH PRACTICE.

Grace and easiness is all important. The driver who sits crouching forward, holding the reins at arm's length, brands himself as a holiday tripper.

He who in pulling up throws back his head and brings his hands almost to his chin, does not know his business. The right way to pull up is to catch the end of the reins with the right hand and pull them through the fingers of the left hand till the required pressure is obtained; the driver does not lean back at all.

A minor accident which the amateur finds distressing is when a horse catches one of the reins beneath his tail and holds it there. To pull under such circumstances would probably be to find one of the horse's hind legs through the dashboard and reposing on the seat beside you.

Try first of all slackening the reins. Very often if you let go he will, and then you may remove the rein without difficulty. Failing this, speak to the horse and pat him on the hind quarters to prevent his being alarmed, and then gently lift up the tail and take the rein out.

SHOWING A HORSE OFF.

A good driver prides himself not only on covering the journey with the least fatigue to his horse, but also upon making the horse show himself to the best advantage. To this end you should always drive with what the professional horseman calls a spare leg, which means that you should go at a speed less than that which the horse is capable of. No horse can show its fullest action going at the top of its speed.

Bearing reins, the use of which has been so much discussed, are, of course, adopted for the same purpose. Whether they are to be employed or not must be left to the taste of the driver, but there is little doubt that in the case of a puller they relieve his arms to a very great extent.

W. IRONSIDE.

THE FASHIONABLE MOUSTACHE.

Paragraph 660 of the King's Regulations ordains that the chin and under lip of officers and men alike shall be shaved, but not the upper lip. Not very long ago a few young officers serving in India returned from furlough with smooth upper lips. Their colonel, however, immediately ordered them to allow the hair to grow again, a command in which he was supported by Lord Kitchener. The same thing happened with some young men in the Irish command, but the innovation was promptly stopped by General Lord Grenfell.

The older officers have nothing to say against this particular regulation, but to-day is the day of the young man, and the officer who is somewhere between twenty-eight and thirty-five feels that he will find small favour in the eyes of the fair sex if he sports a luxuriant moustache which it is obvious can only have been grown after many years, and which consequently makes him appear as old as he is.

And so the custom has grown of clipping the moustache fairly closely in order that it may resemble as nearly as possible that of a man between twenty and twenty-five. This style has been branded as the tooth-brush moustache, but it has proved none the less popular, for it is our young officers who set the fashion in the matter of face ornamentation as well as in clothes. The moustache inevitably adds to the apparent age, but if it is closely clipped it does so to a much less extent than if it is allowed to reach its full growth.

WHAT HAVE I DONE?

A FANTASY.

"What have I done?" asks the child wonderingly. Blue-eyed and tousy-headed, just able to walk and more than able to be troublesome, as tall as your knee but needing the watching care of half-a-dozen women if he would be kept out of mischief, he is both the delight and the sorrow of his mother, who has to look after him and her house, and who is too poor to hire assistance.

To-day she is feeling irritable, and he will not keep still. For a moment she loses patience and mutters: "You little trial!" as she sinks into a chair.

Stealing up to her and climbing into her lap, his crowing for the moment stilled, he gazes into her face and sobs: "Mammy, what have I done?"

* * *

"What have I done?" mutters the young man looking at his fallen foe. They had been good friends from boyhood's days till now. The other had mentioned a woman's name slightingly, little thinking what she was to his companion. There had been a quick retort: "You lie!"

Then the hands that had once been clasped in friendship were clenched for battle. Blindly they drove at one another, each hot with the sense of injury. Madly they fought, heeding not even the ordinary rules of fair combat. Then there came a moment when one slipped, and the other, seizing the opportunity, crashed his fist on his mouth and watched him fall unconscious to the ground.

With that, all anger vanished and the only thought was remorse. Bending on his knees beside the other, the victor clenches his teeth and moans: "What have I done?"

* * *

"What have I done?" asks the clerk. He had lived far beyond the twenty-five shillings paid to him weekly, for poverty was so hard, and his friends were so merry.

Small debts grew to large ones, and his creditors were pressing for their money. Then there seemed salvation, for there came to him a stable tip. But to avail himself of it he must have money, and the only way of getting it was from his employer's cash-box. What did that matter? He would pay it all back if the horse won. Win? It must win. It was all or nothing with him. The bet was placed.

Then came the anxious day of waiting, the suspense to be ended only with the arrival of the early edition of the evening paper. Eagerly he unfolds it and turns to the racing news. The horse was left at the post! As he covers his face with his hands, he groans aloud: "What have I done?"

* * *

"What have I done?" sobs the ne'er-do-well. Five years ago he got into trouble, and, instead of facing the music like a man, he bolted from the country without even saying farewell to those nearest and dearest to him.

Now his crime has been forgotten, and he has returned home to learn that his mother is dead—died on the day he disappeared. Cardiac syncope the doctors said it was, but he knows that she died of a broken heart. "What have I done?"

* * *

"What have I done?" mutters the old man, as truth shines her torch upon his past life. Money was his god, and for it he sacrificed everything—love, honour and all that is worth having. Now he is tottering on the brink of the grave, and the falseness of his ambition is borne in upon him.

His family have long since been driven from him, and he is faced with the misery of loneliness.

As he looks upon the luxury with which he is surrounded and thinks of the futility of his life, he cries: "My God! What have I done?"

F. M. HACKER.

A Modern Crusader

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By

SIGISMUND SMITH.

Mr. Peter Slatford—it would be wrong to omit the Mister, for all his bills emphasised the fact that he was entitled to this distinction—was a little man with black, straight, long hair, a pale face, and a nose that was suggestive of indigestion.

When he came to Middlebridge he failed to create much sensation. His temperance lectures were certainly well attended by the enthusiasts of the town, but the other people stopped away, and Mr. Slatford was sore at heart, for he had many little books to sell, from a penny apiece upwards, and as all the enthusiasts were already supplied with copies, his market had reached its limit.

It was then that he conceived the daring scheme which he announced by special handbills. On a certain evening, he assured the now interested townsfolk, he would enter every public-house in Middlebridge, would lock the door as soon as he got inside so that the customers and the staff could not escape, and would lecture them on the enormity of their offences till they finally agreed to troop out with him and attend his special meeting in the Drill Hall.

"No one but myself will enter these dreadful places," his bills announced. "Friends may wait outside if they like, but I shall beard each lion in his den single-handed."

Close beside the Drill Hall, and therefore most likely to receive the first visit, was the "Horse and Groom," a little beer-house owned and conducted by old George Hodder. George, like his father before him, brewed his own beer, and prided himself upon the fact that it was the best for miles around. He also kept strict discipline, and drunkenness was a thing unknown in his house.

One whole day, and half of a night, George puzzled his brains to devise a suitable reception for Mr. Peter Slatford, but it was not till the eve of the promised invasion that he hit on anything feasible. Then there came into the bar an old vermin catcher who had been pursuing his calling outside the town. He had in a bag four harmless grass snakes which he had caught, and which he now produced for the entertainment of the customers.

George's mind worked quickly. He received the special assurance of the hunter that the snakes could do no one an injury, and then he bought the four at a shilling each. He next contracted with his visitor for a dozen large rats, and four dozen mice.

Next night at the "Horse and Groom" the temperance reformer was the chief topic of conversation.

"I hear," remarked one, "that he has worked up Mr. Curling to such a pitch that he has promised to hand him over £1,000 for the benefit of the cause."

"Well, well," said another, "Curling is a bigger fool than I'd have thought him. A man who can make a fortune as he has done, even though they do say it was by faking chocolate out of brickdust and clay, ought to know how to keep his hands about his cash."

Hardly had the speaker finished when there was heard out in the street the trampling of many feet. The noise stopped outside the "Horse and Groom," and gave place to animated talking.

"Friends, friends," said a voice, "calm yourselves! Wait here till I reduce the blackguards to submission."

At this there was a mild cheer from the enthusiasts who were gathered outside. In another moment Mr. Peter Slatford had stepped into the bar and closed and locked the door behind him. He put the key in his pocket, and stepped up to the counter where old George was leaning with his head resting on his hands.

"It's you who corrupt the people of this town," said Mr. Slatford politely. "Sir, you are a son of Satan, and one day you will be struck with some horrible disease. I marvel that a thunderbolt does not strike this building even while I speak. The beer you sell is rank poison, vile trash not fit for pigs."

This uncomplimentary reference to his beer was more than old George could stand. He bent down behind the counter and opened a little basket. Presently a rat made its way beneath the flap of the counter, squirmed through the wicket that had been placed there to keep out dogs, and scampered around the feet of Mr. Slatford.

Mr. Slatford seated himself on a high stool which stood before the counter, and tucked up his feet till his heels rested on the circular bar of the strengthened legs of the stool.

"Well," said old George, "you look as if you were going to make yourself comfortable."

"Comfort in such a place as this would be impossible," said Mr. Slatford. "I have mounted this stool in order to avoid being contaminated with the vermin which seem to invest this place. Ah, my friends, you see what is bred in the vicinity of beer. Who can tell what ghastly creatures there may be in your own insides?"

The rat scampered about the floor and presently disappeared beneath a bench, nobody taking any notice of it, for George's instructions had been strict on this point. Mr. Slatford was just regaining confidence, and was about to descend from the stool when there came a fresh excursion of eleven large rats and forty-eight little mice from behind the counter.

Mr. Slatford regained his position on the stool very quickly, but one of the rats happened to be of an inquisitive turn of mind. It nimbly climbed up one leg of the stool, and Mr. Slatford as nimbly ascended above it till he stood balanced precariously upon the summit of the none too stable seat.

His heart at that moment longed for a pair of bicycle clips with which to secure the bottoms of his trousers from invasion, but no such useful implements were at hand, so he folded the seams of his nether garments close against his ankles and held them there with his fingers.

The rat, however, had by this time got over the edge of the stool, and began sniffing at Mr. Slatford's very white hands, and so, to avoid the more immediate if less terrible risk, he released the foot of his trousers, held his fingers as high in the air as he could and kicked at the rat with all his might.

Unfortunately he missed the rodent, and his foot shot out with such force that the stool toppled from beneath him, and he fell heavily to the ground.

One hand landed in the sawdust spittoon, but that was not the worst misfortune. It happened that a very large and fat rat had been resting on precisely that spot of the floor on which Mr. Slatford sat down. There was a wicked squeal, and Mr. Slatford got up hurriedly and removed the crushed and mangled carcass of a rat which adhered obstinately to the seat of his trousers.

Old George watched him from the other side of the counter with great solemnity.

"I've seen many drunks in my time, but I've never seen one behave just like you," he said. "What do you think you see?"

"See?" cried Mr. Slatford. "Why I see rats and mice all about me. The place is alive with them."

"I thought you were imagining something of that kind," said old George. "It's terrible the things people think they see when they've been drinking too much whisky. You will be supposing you see snakes next!"

And sure enough at that very moment four vigorous snakes came wriggling from beneath the counter. Mr. Slatford hastily set the stool upon its feet again and scrambled once more upon it. Nobody else moved, for the customers had already been informed that the snakes were harmless.

"Take away those snakes! Oh, take them away!" shouted Mr. Slatford. "Won't anybody open the door and let them out?"

"My dear sir," old George remonstrated, "you have the key in your pocket, and if you want the door opened you must jump down and do it yourself."

Mr. Slatford wondered whether he dared do so, but his indecision vanished when he saw one snake rearing its head majestically half way between him and the locked door.

"I couldn't bring myself to pass that monster," he replied, shuddering, and rubbing his eyes to make certain that he was not dreaming. "I believe—I really believe, it might eat me up."

He turned appealingly to where the landlord stood gazing at him in amazement.

"Sir," he said to old George, "I'll give you anything—anything in reason—if you'll take this key and open that door and let these fearful creatures out."

"Well," said George, "I might oblige you, but I would require you to do something for me in return. It's obvious you've brought yourself to this pitiable condition by drinking crude spirits. Now I want you to sign this pledge. Read it for yourself." And he passed him a sheet of paper.

"Having found that strong whisky is extremely injurious to my health," it ran, "and being convinced of the fact that George Hodder's ale is the best drink that was ever invented for man, I hereby pledge myself never in future to drink any alcoholic beverage but it."

"If you will sign that and drink a pint of my ale," said old George, "I'll unlock the door."

Mr. Slatford refused absolutely, but one of the snakes had begun to emulate the first rat, and he observed that it was making its way up one leg of the stool, so he capitulated. Pen and ink were brought, the document was laid upon the bar, and Mr. Slatford bent down at the imminent risk of another upset, till he was within reach, and signed it.

"That," said old George, "I shall frame and hang on the wall as my most treasured testimonial. Now for the second part of the bargain." And he filled a pint pot with the strongest of his old ale.

Mr. Slatford took it in his hand, shut his eyes tightly, and raised it to his lips.

After the first few mouthfuls Mr. Slatford stopped coughing. When he was half way down the pot he began to take a more cheerful outlook upon life.

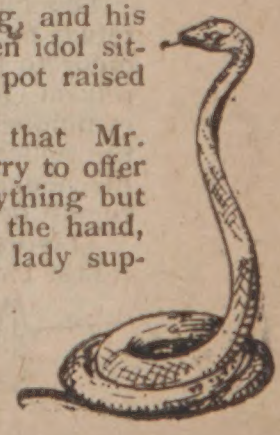
"Do you know," he said, as the mellow effects of George's old ale began to work upon his unaccustomed stomach, "do you know I'm inclined to think that those r-rats d-don't exist except in m-m-my im-imagination?"

Then, delighted at the roar of applause that greeted this sally, he began to tell the assembled company a funny story that someone had once told him. It was not a very nice story, but the company were not particular.

Old George, however, was not to be hoodwinked by stories or anything else. He insisted that Mr. Slatford should drain the pot to the last drop, and, just as the lower edge came up on a level with Mr. Slatford's nose he unlocked the door, thus allowing the vermin to escape and Mr. Slatford's friends to enter.

The first to come in was Mr. Curling, and his expression as he looked upon his fallen idol sitting there on the counter with a beer pot raised to his lips was picturesque.

The most unfortunate point was that Mr. Slatford was by this time far too merry to offer the slightest explanation or to do anything but shake the landlord most heartily by the hand, and finally to hug one of his elderly lady supporters round the neck.



The David of Michel Angelo.

Rapid Physical Development

A WEEKLY FEATURE.

Conducted by

F. G. MITCHELL, M.A.

SWEAT.

The man who does not sweat copiously during hard physical exertion misses a lot. For one thing, sweat cools the body and thereby enables you to continue the exertion longer than you otherwise could; it removes waste matter and so frees the muscles from the particles consumed by exercise. It helps the muscles to regain their condition quickly, and that is in a nutshell the object of all training.

It is only under exceptional circumstances that sweat is visible, but it is going on all the time. In the course of a day no less than three teacupfuls of water, one-and-a-half ounces of fatty acids and urea, and two ounces of carbon dioxide are removed from the body by means of sweat.

Perspiration can be increased by certain drugs, but they do more harm than good. The only sensible ways of getting a good sweat with all its benefits are to take a warm bath or to indulge in strenuous exercises; the latter course is the better, because it serves two purposes at once.

The more you sweat the more need is there of frequent bathing. The perspiration cleans the pores of the skin better than water, but it also brings to the surface those products which will be offensive if not removed by washing.

SHOULDERS AND BREAST.

Sit upright in a chair and grasp the bars underneath the seat with both hands. Now pull the bars upwards with all your strength; relax and repeat.

Better than weight-lifting.

This exercise demands a mental control of the muscles, for, of course, the bars of the chair do not actually move. You try to pull them up and fail, but the effort does you more good than if you succeeded in lifting an actual weight. It comes under the category of tensing exercises, and the strain being entirely of your own making there need be no tax on the heart.

It will depend on the length of your arms and the build of the chair which bars you are to grasp. In some cases it is well to take those on which the seat is actually fixed; in others, those which strengthen the legs of the chair half-way down. That is a point you can easily settle. The arms should hang straight down, and the hands should be placed on whichever bar comes nearest them.

While beneficial to the arms, this exercise is chiefly useful for the development of the shoulder and breast muscles, which are not as a general rule sufficiently considered in schemes for physical culture.

HINTS TO DEVELOPER USERS.

The manufacturers of indiarubber developers refuse to be responsible for accidents which may occur to their users, and they are wise in their refusal, for mishaps are not infrequent. The commonest one happens when you are using the apparatus as a chest expander and one of the hooks at the end of the rubber strand becomes detached from the dumb-bell.

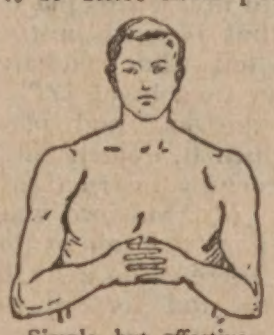
This usually occurs when the rubber is at its fullest tension, and consequently the metal hook flies back and strikes your hand with great force, or your head if you happen to be doing a shoulder exercise. The risk can easily be prevented by passing a piece of wire or stout string through the hooks of the strands and the loop of the dumb-bell, thus fixing them so that they cannot slip out.

In the course of time the strands of a developer that is regularly used become weak. If you examine the weakened cord closely you will find that the rubber has not given all along its length but has broken underneath the thread covering at one place. There is no need to get a new strand if this is all; simply double the empty covering back till you get the two pieces of sound rubber overlapping, and then bind them round with strong thread.

Nothing is more annoying both to the user of the developer and to the occupants of neighbouring rooms than a dumb-bell which creaks every time you turn the wooden handle that covers the metal core. Here again the remedy is simple; unscrew one end of the dumb-bell, pull the core out of its covering, and rub it generously with ordinary soap. Oil is too messy, but soap sticks where it is put.

FOR THE SHOULDERS.

Stand easily, clasp your hands lightly across your chest, and do not allow them to rise from it or shift their position in any way during the exercise. Now raise your shoulders as high as possible, thrust them back, then down, then to the front and up again. Viewed from the side, your shoulders would be seen to describe small circles. Repeat ten times.



Simple, but effective.

The muscles both of the chest and back immediately connected with the shoulders will rapidly improve under this treatment. The exercise should be done fairly quickly, not more than five seconds being taken to complete the circular movements.

FOR THE NECK.

Lie on the back, placing the arms by the sides but not letting them press on the floor. Raise your head six inches from the floor, and throughout the exercise do not again allow it to come in contact with the carpet. Your neck has thus to bear the full weight of your head, and that pressing down horizontally instead of vertically as usual.

Now raise the head till the chin is pressed against the neck, and you are able to see your feet; pause a moment, and lower the head to its former position, taking care that it does not touch the floor. Repeat from five to ten times.

Next turn your head sideways till you can see the carpet immediately behind your right shoulder; pause a moment, and turn it till you can see the spot behind your left. Repeat till the muscles begin to tire.

A muscular neck always looks well.

During this exercise the shoulder blades must not leave the floor.

This is absolutely the best exercise for the rapid development of the neck muscles. Do it all slowly, and keep the head off the carpet all through.

If the muscles are in poor condition and you find the exercise over hard, do it only a few times till your neck strengthens up.

A man's muscular development is frequently judged by the observer according to the development of his neck. This part should therefore receive due attention

FORCING ENERGY.

BEWARE OF YOUR ENEMY, SLACKNESS.

To what extent ought a man to fight against the disinclination for exercise?

It is argued in many quarters that laziness is nature's way of informing you that exertion would do you harm; in other words, that if you fight against laziness you are likely to do yourself a positive injury.

The fallacy of this will be obvious to those who are compelled to do anything at regular times. To earn your daily bread you have to turn out to work at a fixed hour each morning, and for several days every week you get up with a feeling that you would almost sacrifice your prospects for another ten minutes in bed.

Yet the outside circumstance of having to work for somebody else sets you going at the prescribed hour. You have been compelled to overcome your laziness, and you are not a whit the worse for having done so. You find yourself, in fact, fresher than you do on Sunday morning when you can lie in bed indefinitely.

Just as it is useful to have some outside compelling force to help you to overcome laziness in business, so it is advisable for those who are interested in physical culture to belong to one or more clubs.

It is all very well to say that the right time to take exercise is when you feel inclined to do so, but many of us were born tired, and if we waited till we felt inclined for exercise we should never begin at all.

You get home from work at, say, half-past six. Shortly after seven you have fed and washed and are ready for the business of the evening, which may, I take it, be one of three things: loafing, exercise, or study.

I am not writing for the studious, so we may confine our attention to the other two ways of passing the evening leisure. If your work has been hard there comes upon you a strong inclination to loaf. You feel tired and unfit for further exertion. If, however, you have made an appointment at your club and have arranged to take part in exercise, your laziness is overcome by outside force, you get a move on you, take your exercise, and after it feel fresher than you have done all day; and you wonder why you ever felt disinclined to leave the house.

I speak from experience. Time and again I have conquered laziness to attend a swimming, sprinting, or quoits' club, all in order that I should not disappoint some friend whom I had arranged to meet. I make it my invariable custom to fill up every evening of the week in advance in order that I shall have no opportunity of slacking.

It is necessary here to give a warning. Overcoming laziness is one thing; fighting fatigue is another. Although I strongly advocate the struggle against slackness, I should never urge anyone to continue exertion when fatigue makes its presence known.

The man who is running a cross-country race and finds he is winded will do himself a serious injury if he continues running at the same speed. If on the other hand he accepts nature's warning in good part, and slackens his pace accordingly, he will have received benefit from the exertion he has made, and will be able to do better on each following occasion.

How are you to know fatigue from laziness? I can't tell you, but your instinct can and does. It takes an astonishing effort to overcome real fatigue, because nature is exhausted; but laziness is much more easy to combat.

Each of us knows of several men who have been obliged to give up athletics by doctors' orders. They have injured themselves functionally because they have continued to exert themselves after the warning of fatigue has come to them. Fatigue and slackness are so much alike in certain respects that they are apt to be confused, but the physical culturist who means to get on must distinguish between them. The promptings of fatigue must be obeyed; those of slackness must be strenuously fought.

D. LITSTER.

THE POOR MAN'S BATH.

ARE WE REALLY A CLEANLY PEOPLE?

The remark of a witness at a Stepney inquest in regard to the cleanliness of the poorer London classes, deserves to become classical.

"They were the cleanest old couple in Stepney," she said. "They always washed their hands before going to bed."

Then we have Canon Horsley's assurance that "in my own huge South London parish, which contains 13,000 souls, mine is the only bath."

With the owner of some cottage property I was recently discussing the problem of bathing amongst the poor, and I suggested that cleanliness might be more popular if bathrooms were more common. He assured me that that had not been his experience. He said that his houses were let at from 7s. 6d. to 10s. a week, and that in each of them there was a bath.

In one case, he said, the bath was actually used as the family receptacle for coal; in another a bed had been made up in the bath for the lodger, and he learned that this bed was never removed to allow the bath to be put to its proper use; in quite half his houses the bath was used as a storing place for rags and other rubbish. His argument was that the working classes needed to be educated to bathe, that merely supplying them with facilities for doing so was not sufficient.

I am almost driven to agree with my friend and his conclusion, for bathing is such a simple matter that scarcely anyone need do without it.

All you really want to have a bath is a pail of water, a towel, a rag and some soap. The rag may be wetted and rubbed over the entire surface of your body, to be followed by a similar application of the soap; then follow frequent applications of the rag, now rinsed clean in the water, and finally a brisk rubbing with the towel.

Though inconvenient, one towel will be sufficient if it is dried after each occasion. In cases of extreme poverty, where a towel cannot be bought, I do not think any harm would result from allowing the body to dry in the air, provided a little exercise were taken in order to prevent the danger of a chill.

Thus we reduce the cost of a daily bath to practically nothing, and yet the working classes do not avail themselves of it.

There are all degrees between the kind of bathing above described and that which may be enjoyed by the millionaire. We may improve the most primitive form by placing beneath our feet a large pan like a glorified saucer, to prevent the water that may drip from us from wetting the floor. It is possible to obtain these shallow baths made from a kind of waterproof cloth, and so constructed that they can be folded up for travelling.

A primitive but efficient form of shower bath may be constructed by any handy man. All you want is three yards of indiarubber tubing and a brass double junction.

Cut one yard off the length, bend it round in a circle and fix the ends in the brass junction; the third tube of brass is to be pressed into one end of the long piece of rubber. Thus you have a collar of rubber tubing which you may put about your neck, and a length attached to it which may be fixed to a tap.

Bore a few small holes on the inner side of the collar part. When the tap is then turned a stream of water will play on the shoulders and down over the whole body.

A daily wash of this description, and a weekly hot dip at the local Corporation baths, should be quite sufficient to maintain the skin in perfect cleanliness and to keep the body in health.

Even the facilities offered by many public baths are not taken advantage of by the working classes. At Newport, Wales, the public baths are thrown open free of charge once a week, but few of the working men of that town avail themselves of the privilege. It will be time enough to improve local baths when we find the people making some effort to bathe themselves at home.

H. PATERSON

SPORTING STORIES

TESTIMONY.

The Cockney sportsman had writen to the stores for a full assortment of all their fly hooks, but the trout in the particular Scotch stream, possibly following the national principle of caution, refused to bite.

It was then that his landlord advised him to pay a visit to the shop of one Dougal MacIntosh, the village barber, and the fly-dresser of the district.

"Me man," said the Cockney sportsman, "I am informed that you dress flies, haw!"

"Ow ay," replied Dougal.

"And do your flies look natural, eh what?" asked the Cockney.

"Hech, sirs! It's no for me to say, but there was a spider ran awa' wi' twa o' them yesterday," said Dougal, "an' he ocht to be a guid judge."

OPEN TO IMPROVEMENT.

"Good gracious me!" said the local ironmonger, as Mr. Carpottle entered the shop, "However have you managed to get your face torn like that? Have you been trying cross-country running by night through thorn hedges, or have you been using a piece of barbed wire for face massage? Or has your wife——"

"Jest not," said Mr. Carpottle. "You remember supplying me with a luminous plate to fit over the front door keyhole, because when I happen to be detained at the office and come home late I find it difficult to get my latchkey into the right place. Well, this is the result of using that invention."

"Didn't you see it glowing distinctly in the darkness?"

"I did," replied Mr. Carpottle, "and I plunged the key into it, but it happened to be the one remaining eye of our old cat who was sitting on the doorstep."

REAL SPORT.

It was a mixed party that had gathered at the shooting box, for the host was a man with wide interests and many friends. Lord Tiddleum was walking along with a blue-spectacled German naturalist.

"Beastly bore, grouse shooting, what?" remarked his lordship. "You know—aw—I believe in big-game shooting—aw—where there's a spice of danger—aw. There's no risk in—aw—shooting grouse, so I call it dull, what?"

"Ach, mine vriend," said the German, "den it could nod have been better arranged, vor you will enjoy your sport to-day. Dere will be blenty of danger. De last time I go shoot, I shoot my bruzzer-in-law in de stummick!"

PHYLLIS.

When Mr. Murgatroyd woke he beheld his wife sitting up in bed scowling at him.

"Good morning, my dear," he said, but she ignored his remark.

"William Henry," she said, "who is Phyllis? You've been talking about Phyllis all night in your sleep, and I demand to know who the hussy is."

"Phyllis?" mused Mr. Murgatroyd. "Ah, yes, my dear, Phyllis is Jones's new mare. Such a beautiful creature you never saw."

Mrs. Murgatroyd's eyebrows came a little closer together, and William Henry flinched.

"Yes, I daresay you think a lot of her," she cooed. "You asked Jones's mare to put her arms round your neck. You called her your little popsy-wops, and you told Jones's mare you could die happy if your head was resting on her breast."

And then Mr. Murgatroyd had to invent something fresh. Keep back there, you boys.

BOOKS.

A good book is the best of friends, the same to-day and for ever.—MARTIN FARQUHAR TUPPER.

When you drink beer for some time you cease to appreciate its taste, and its only effect upon you is a soporific and stupefying one. It is very much the same with books.

Take a book like "She," or "Dracula," or parts of "Doctor Nikola," and, if you are gifted with imagination, you will find it extremely hard to lay the book down when the hour for bed arrives. Delighted with the thrills, you continue drinking in the author's words in the hope of increasing the intensity of the sensation experienced.

It is here that one must exercise self-restraint for the fuller enjoyment of the book.

A chapter ends with a thrill, and you are impelled to read at least the beginning of the next in order to see how the hero is extricated from his predicament; the following chapter being an artistic whole, you find it impossible to break off in the middle of it, and so you drift on to the end and afterwards into the next chapter, till you finally finish the book.

By this time your attention has been strained for too long, and you feel the inevitable disappointment of not discovering that each thrill is more intense than the former, and so you lay the book down, feeling that it is just, perhaps, fairly good.

To enjoy a book to its fullest extent, read it slowly, and always break off at some interesting place. In this way you will have an additional point of interest in life. During the weary hours of work you will enjoy the refreshing anticipation of again returning to your book to discover what finally happens to the person whom you left in trouble. In the reading of books as in most other good things of life, it is wisest to leave off before the appetite is fully satisfied.

The choosing of books is all important, and never should the reader force himself to get through that which he does not enjoy. Probably the most useful type of book to the average man is the kind where he is able in imagination to enjoy that activity, and participate in that romantic adventure, which is forbidden to him in his own life.

There is the spirit of the traveller in most of our race, and in even the reputedly cowardly there is some trace of a fighting ancestor. Thus we turn to Scott, with whose characters we may ride our warhorses and fight our country's foes, while sitting in all the comfort of an easy chair.

The more contemplative mind, the mind that lives not in the romance of the past or present, but in the enjoyment of the humour and pathos of everyday existence, will turn to Dickens.

The type of book which deals with what the French call pornographie, or, as we more bluntly express it, "smut," is written and consumed chiefly by women. The passions which they there find described they are forbidden by the rules of society from experiencing in more actual fact.

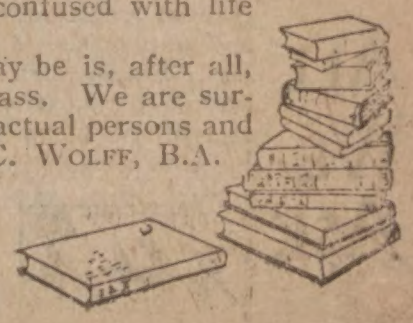
From the days of Euripides the "human" writer has always had a following. Dealing with the lusts which are part and parcel of our composition, he or she will never remain unread.

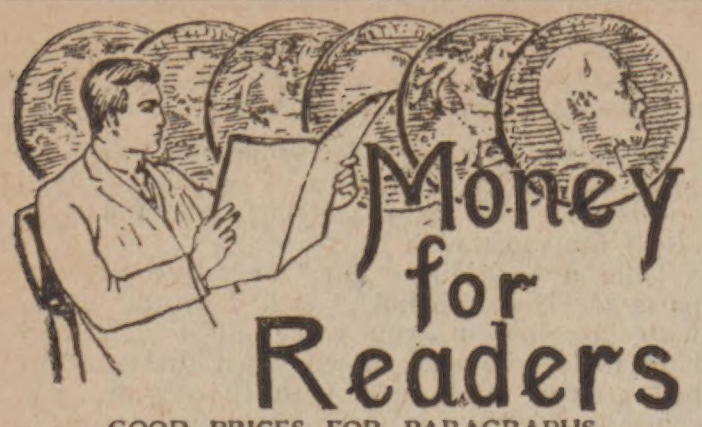
The chief fault that the smutty book possesses is that it leaves a nasty taste in the mouth. You may read it with interest, but you find no refreshment in its pages. There is nothing invigorating. It is the perfume of the lotus which persuades its consumer of the fruitlessness of endeavour.

With many reading is a mania. They will read anything from a work on astronomy to an advertisement on a hoarding, and of each they retain an equally vague impression. Just as the intoxication of alcohol may be temporarily mistaken for the buoyancy of good health, so books, which only portray life, are confused with life itself.

A book, however good it may be is, after all, but an image in a looking glass. We are surrounded on every hand by the actual persons and objects reflected therein.

C. WOLFF, B.A.





GOOD PRICES FOR PARAGRAPHS.

In our fourth and subsequent numbers this page will be devoted to contributions by our readers. Select a subject you know all about—your trade or your favourite recreation—and send us a few facts concerning it; paragraphs should not exceed 250 words. You are free to send your contribution on a post-card if you like.

The chief thing to bear in mind is that all paragraphs must be of masculine interest.

Each week a prize of One Guinea will be forwarded to the writer of the best paragraph, and 5s. to the senders of each of the others used.

If your paragraph arrives too late for one week's competition it will be considered for that of the following week. Rest assured that all contributions will be carefully read.

Do not allow the lack of a facile pen to prevent you from competing. If the stuff is good, absence of style will not injure your chances. We will lick it into literary shape.

Address your letters or post-cards to the Paragraph Editor, THE MODERN MAN, Westinghouse Building, Strand, London.

ARE CIGARETTES DEADLY?

Like every other form of enjoyment, the cigarette has never lacked its army of detractors. They have told us that it causes throat and eye diseases, and that it undermines the general health.

There is not an atom of foundation for these assertions, and in no case of throat or eye affection has the cause been proved to be cigarette smoking. The conjunction of the two things is merely a theory, and there is no evidence to back it up.

One striking proof of the wholesomeness of good cigarettes is that quite fifty per cent. of doctors smoke them to the exclusion of tobacco in all other forms.

We do not intend to imply that there is no danger in excessive cigarette smoking. Abnormal indulgence in anything, even food, is bound to have bad effects, but the moderate cigarette smoker can puff with the knowledge that his liking is a harmless one.

SOFT SEATS.

The office worker likes to annex the softest chair or stool in the building, under the impression that the fatigue of sitting is lessened by a well padded seat.

A prominent medical man recently pointed out the possible dangers accruing from this practice. Nature has provided us, he says, with a ready-made cushion of fat and muscle. When we sit on a smooth and hard surface the weight of the body is borne by three main points, but when we rest on something soft and yielding the muscles of the thighs also bear a large proportion of the weight, and, being thus subjected to pressure, the circulation within these muscles is much retarded.

The same thing applies to bicycle saddles, those of hard leather being just as comfortable as the soft or inflated variety, and much more healthful.

LITTLE DECEPTIONS.

"Life is full of petty deceptions," remarked a pawnbroker to the writer. "That young fellow who just left the shop, bought five athletic medals, which he proposes to wear on his watch-chain.

"He is going to a job in another town, so his deception is not likely to be found out. Each bears an inscription, and he will get an engraver to alter the name and the dates, as some of the medals are for events of twenty years ago.

"I can always dispose of a medal," he continued, "especially if it's not too old. There is a slump in Crimeas now, but I get a good price for a South Africa medal. A young soldier will buy it to wear when he goes mashing. Of course, he daren't show it to those who know he was never there."

ALL WE ASK

BOGUS SINNERS.

The bogus sinner is a product of the time and a nuisance. He is in reality a very respectable young man, but he assures you that he is a perfect devil after a glass of port, and he puts off the consumption of his refreshment till the last moment so that he may be seen coming home after closing time.

If he meets an old lady friend, on her way home from a mothers' meeting, his walk is normal, but if he sees a man of his acquaintance he assumes the unsteadily majestic gait of the confirmed toper.

On Sunday he cycles or fishes, not because he wants to, but because it looks naughty and the sort of thing a gay spark might be expected to do.

The ordinary, mild invectives in everyday use he banishes altogether, substituting for them a choice assortment of nasty words. He seems, again, more naughty than he is, and so he is content.

The bogus sinner is the one person on earth whom the real sinner cannot stand.

FACTORIES FOR GOLF BALLS.

The old days when golf balls were made by caddies and other spare-time workers are long since past. The balls are now turned out in factories, one firm producing over 100,000 each week.

On a small core 190 yards of fine rubber thread is tightly wound, the rubber being stretched during the process to many times its natural length. It is this core which gives to the ball its elasticity and enables it to be driven so far.

When the rubber core is finished it is encased in a gutta percha cover, the two halves of which are welded together and marked with the bramble pattern by a machine. The ball is then given five coats of paint, and as soon as these are dry it is ready for the market.

TOILET CLUBS.

Toilet club is the name given to an arrangement whereby a barber contracts with a customer to shave him, cut his hair, shampoo him and singe him as often as he likes within a certain period for a fixed sum. Various inducements are held out to the customer, as, for example, that of having a shaving brush and sponge reserved exclusively for his use.

If you are in the habit of shaving every day you will save a little money by joining a toilet club. What you gain, however, you lose in another way. Toilet club members find the barber's assistants careless and none too civil.

You cannot blame the men for this. Most London barbers get fifty per cent. of the price of every shave and fifty per cent. of any sum over sixpence run up by the customer; but they only have a penny for any service to a toilet club subscriber. It is but human, therefore, that they should dislike serving subscribers, and that they hurry through their work as speedily as possible in order to get to the more lucrative outsider.

THE BOGEY OF BASHFULNESS.

It is pitiful to see a muscular giant shrinking within himself as he listens to the light chatter of a party of girls and young men who have not, perhaps, half his strength or brain-power, but who are free from the trammels of the bogey of bashfulness.

The cure for bashfulness is to join a debating society, preferably a small one; if there are a dozen members present at each meeting, it will answer our purpose. Let the bashful man make a beginning, though it be only to shout: "Hear, hear!"

Having once broken the ice, he must make a speech, however short. He will at the end of it feel a fool; so does everyone else under similar conditions. Let him do it again, and yet again. His bashfulness will drop from him like a garment, and he will be able to face the eyes of all the world if need be.

Bashfulness is an accentuated form of self-consciousness, and the debating society knocks that on the head.

CARRYING THINGS ON CYCLES.

Don't carry things on your cycle, to use an Irishism, by keeping them in your hand. No matter how expert a rider may be, if he has a bag in one hand and the other encumbered with books and papers, the bike is simply waiting for a favourable opportunity to play him tricks.

A flat carrier to fit over the rear mudguard costs little, and it is so light that it need never be removed from the cycle. It is then ready at all times to receive any package you may have; your parcel is fixed down to the carrier in a moment, and off you go, both hands free for emergencies.

While the rear carrier is the most useful in a general way, the other types have their claims. The advantage of a front carrier is that it does not interfere with mounting or dismounting, but on the other hand it is always in sight and serves to remind the rider of the dead weight he is plugging.

The carrier which fits inside the frame might have been made very useful if more trouble had been taken with it. As it is, the bags supplied for this purpose are so badly constructed that they bulge at the sides in such a way that you scrape them with your knees.

If you are loading up your cycle with a quantity of luggage, try to distribute it evenly, having some on the front as well as behind, so that the weight may be distributed and the back wheel not given more than its fair burden.

THE CITY'S CHIEF WHIP.

Billy Wright, the Lord Mayor's coachman, is the type of character Dickens would have loved to portray; a first-class whip, and possessed of a fund of humour, he has but one fault, if fault it be—he is a teetotaler.

Sir William Treloar is given to telling an amusing story about him. Before he was Lord Mayor, Sir William happened to meet the famous coachman one day.

"Wright," he said, "you and I have known each other at a distance for some time. If I am elected I trust we shall become friends."

"If you are elected!" cried the other, in apparent dismay at the very thought of failure. "Why, Sir William, it is the ambition of the whole city to see you Lord Mayor!"

Naturally enough Sir William felt very gratified, and for some time that sentiment remained.

"But," added Treloar in finishing the story, "I have recently discovered that he said exactly the same thing to somebody else!"

ALARM CLOCKS.

An alarm clock need not be as good a time-keeper as a watch, and for this reason most people who want such mechanical aids to rouse them in the morning invest in a clock of a cheap pattern, costing half-a-crown or so. The main thing is to get one with a big bell. If it is cheap it will also have a big tick, but after the first night the ticking will not disturb you any more than would the throbbing of the engine on board a steamer.

If the clock is placed on a sheet of glass, or on the marble top of a toilet table, the sound of the bell will be much louder than if it were resting on a soft surface. If you have difficulty in waking, try this. If it fails, get an intermittent alarm. It is not the continuous noise that wakes one, but the first outburst; these intermittent clocks are arranged to strike a peal, pause a minute, strike again, and so on for a quarter of an hour.

If you have used cheap alarms for some time it is probable that you have one the clock part of which refuses to go, although the alarm itself is still efficient. It is a simple matter to wind up the alarm of the old clock, attach a string to the guard which holds the hammer, and at the other end of the string the hammer of the new alarm which is in working order. When one alarm goes off it thus releases the other, and you secure a sound of double strength.

Put it where you can see the face; then eye helps ear to coax you from bed.

The Squire's Pheasants

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By
PHILIP TANNER.

The Squire met him in the road between the keeper's house and his own. Tackley touched his forelock and would have passed on, but the Squire pulled him up.

"I suppose you've heard," he said, "that my head-keeper is leaving me?"

"I did hear summat o' kind," said the other.

"It's a nice comfortable job," the Squire continued, "a good cottage, all the milk, fire and paraffin you need, and thirty shillings a week."

James Tackley looked at him very innocently.

"A gentleman's job as you might say, sir," he ventured.

"That it is," said the Squire, "and I'm glad you think it's a good job, for I want you to take it on."

"Thankee, sir, thankee kindly," said Tackley, "but I fear I lack the eddication."

At this the Squire laughed.

"You go on!" he said. "You know as well as I do, you rascal, that it's not education that makes a gamekeeper; it's a knowledge of game, and still more a profound knowledge of poachers and all their tricks."

"Ah, well," said Tackley, sighing heavily and kicking up a stone with the toe of his boot, "I'd be beaten there just the same. You see, my old mother—rest her soul!—would never let me go poaching with the other chaps."

"I daresay not," replied the Squire; "so you went without her permission. Don't pretend to me, James Tackley, that you don't know anything about poaching. You know as well as I do that you're the most cunning, clever and daring poacher in the parish."

"Harkee to that, sirs," cried Tackley, looking about as if there were witnesses to the conversation. "It just shows what evil things slanderers say about a man! No, Squire, I thankee agin for the offer, but I'd never do for a gamekeeper. I'm happier as I am," he added, as he touched his forelock again and passed on, thus ending a conversation in which he assured himself he had been more than commonly diplomatic.

Both the Squire and Tackley were still young men, the latter being but a few years the senior. They were both sportsmen, and, had the Squire been born poor, he would probably have been a poacher; while it is certain that if Tackley had been born rich he would have made a typical and ideal country squire.

In spite of these common interests there existed a professional feud between the two. The Squire admired a fellow sportsman, but his admiration was watered down when the full attentions of that sportsman were concentrated upon his pheasants.

James Tackley was not the only poacher in the parish, but he had hitherto been the most successful. The keepers had time and again devised ingenious schemes for his capture, and they had done it with the Squire's full assent; but unfortunately without the assent of Mr. James Tackley, who consequently succeeded on each occasion in making his escape.

When the keepers captured poachers, the Squire had no hesitation in sending them to the county town to be tried before country magistrates, themselves for the most part game preservers. Had he been able to catch Tackley in the act, it is extremely improbable that he would have served him in like manner, for there was another bond between them apart altogether from their common interest in sport.

When the Squire was a little boy he had fallen into the river, and Tackley, a few years older and a stronger swimmer, had fished him out. It was a circumstance that Tackley might forget but the Squire never would. Nevertheless the Squire and his keepers were particularly anxious to catch Tackley poaching, for they would thus have vindicated their own cleverness and would have inflicted a severe punishment on Tackley by proving to him that he was not quite so smart as he had imagined himself to be.

A head-keeper was eventually engaged to fill the post which Tackley had refused, and shortly after his accession to office he presented himself to the Squire and complained that there appeared to be someone, of almost superhuman skill, who was robbing the coverts systematically. All the ingenuity of the new keeper proved insufficient to effect a capture, and the Squire smiled sadly as he listened to the report, for he knew well enough that the uncatchable poacher was Tackley.

Shortly after this the Squire suddenly emerged on the bank of the river and discovered Tackley sitting on a boulder, repairing a hare net.

"Now, my friend," said the Squire, "I think I've caught you red-handed."

Tackley's innocent blue eyes met his in wonderment.

"It would be a hard thing, Squire, if a poor man could not make a bit net to hang onions in."

At this the Squire laughed outright, but the plump face of Tackley remained impassive.

"Look here, you rogue!" said the Squire. "You refused a job as head-keeper because you thought the work would not suit you. I am determined to stop you poaching one way or another, and I am now going to make you an offer you can hardly refuse. I'll give you a cottage and wages, just like a keeper, but won't ask you to do anything at all, provided you will pass me your word that you will never poach again."

Tackley pushed his cap upwards and scratched his head meditatively.

"That would be a fine provision for my old age," he said, "but I don't think the terms are very fair. If you'd give me a cottage and a weekly wage, I'd sign an agreement offering to let you chop off an ear or a finger every time you caught me poaching. Would that suit you, Squire?"

"I can never understand you," said the Squire. "Here I offer to make you comfortable for life if you will simply give me your word not to poach, and now you want me to add to this certain penalties if I catch you doing it."

"No, Squire, there you're wrong," replied the other. "I don't want you to add this agreement. I want you to put it in instead of my word. You see, if I poached under the agreement I'd just take my chance of punishment, but, if I give my word, of course I won't be able to poach at all."

"I think I see what you're driving at," said the Squire, "but I am not going to alter my offer to give you any loophole. If you accept it you must give me your word not to poach."

"Then," replied Tackley, "I must thankee kindly, Squire, but I can't accept it."

"You dare to say that!" cried the Squire, the blood mantling to his face. "It's equivalent to telling me that you're making more than the worth of the cottage and the good wages off my preserves."

"No, no," replied Tackley, looking about him to see that there was no one to overhear. "I don't make all that out of it, just a bare living, but I could no more give up poaching than you could keep from shooting the birds yourself."

The Squire's face relaxed into a smile, to hide which he swore lustily at the poacher, and then he went his way down the river bank.

It was some time after this meeting that matters came to a crisis. The Squire had invited a party of friends to come down for a few days' shooting, and for their sport a fresh batch of pheasants had been drafted into the coverts from the rearing pens.

The transference had been delayed till the day before the arrival of the visitors in order to minimise the risk of the birds being killed by poachers. But one night was quite sufficient for James Tackley. The keepers were very much on the alert, and he regarded it as necessary to draw them off. Even with all his cunning it was impossible to shoot the birds with the keepers in hiding twenty yards distant.

So Tackley stole silently to the little lake where the wild duck lived, and there he fired his short-barrelled gun in the air. Now if there was one thing that rivalled the pheasant in importance in the eyes of the Squire it was the wild duck. The keepers heard the shot distinctly.

"They have heard about the restocking of the covert," said the new head, "and they know we're here watching. They think it will be safe enough to bag the wild duck, but we'll show them! Come on, my lads. The covert will be all right, for they'll think we're still here. We'll just slip across to the pond and nab them."

When the keepers reached the pond they found no trace of poachers, but while they were hunting about for footmarks at the water's edge they heard quick repeated shots amongst the precious pheasants in the covert a mile and a half away.

James Tackley gathered the still warm birds into a sack, slung it across his shoulder, and smiled with his wonted innocence as he stole silently out of the covert and made for his cottage.

The wrath of the Squire when the incident was repeated to him next morning was great.

"I don't blame you," he said to the keeper, "you've simply met a man who is more clever than yourself, that's all. It can only be one person, and he's Tackley. All the other poachers hunt in gangs; they smoke the birds down with sulphur, or snare them with a bit of wire and a fishing rod, but there is only one man in the parish who has got the pluck to fire at them, and there is only one man who could draw you off so cleverly, and that's Tackley."

"The worst of it is," said the keeper, "that I fear the missing birds are mostly those fine cocks that we thought would give such good sport."

The Squire brought his fist down on the table.

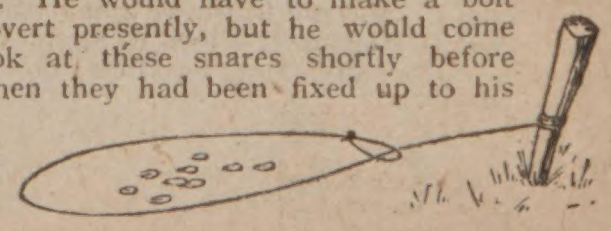
"That settles it!" he said. "I owe Tackley a debt for saving my life, and I don't want him to get into trouble with the police, but I'm determined to protect myself from him somehow. I'll devise a scheme for his overthrow if I have to sit up day and night thinking about it."

But the scheme sufficiently clever for the discomfiture of a man like Tackley did not so readily present itself, and it was not till a week later, when the Squire's guests had departed, that he at last devised a plan which appeared to hold prospects of success. He summoned the head-keeper, divulged it to him, and they resolved to put it into execution immediately.

It was a couple of nights later when James Tackley, armed with his short-barrelled gun, slipped nimbly through a gap of the hedge that divided the Squire's coverts from the high road. He had satisfied himself that the keepers were watching that night up at the warren, and he smiled as he pictured the fate of the poachers he had seen making for that spot with nets and lurchers.

He might have smiled less had he known that the keepers whom he had seen crouching near the warren were new men whom the Squire had engaged for the purpose. The old staff and the Squire himself were concealed in the covert through which Tackley was pushing at that very moment.

Tackley drew from his pocket some wire snares and fixed them in the rabbit runs, the positions of each one of which he knew even in the dark. He would have to make a bolt from the covert presently, but he would come back to look at these snares shortly before dawn. When they had been fixed up to his



satisfaction he stole along beneath the trees, looking upwards at all likely branches in the hope of seeing the form of a pheasant between him and the sky.

He had just discovered a branch on which three pheasants were resting, and he was making a nice calculation as to whether he could bring them all down with one charge delivered from the other side of the path, endways on. He came to the conclusion that he could, and stepped silently over the grass till he reached the top of the bank where he could rake the branch beautifully.

He raised the gun to his shoulder, and was about to pull the trigger when a couple of men dashed from behind the tree against which he was standing and seized him round the body, pinioning his arms to his sides.

What followed happened so quickly that even the active mind of Tackley failed to grasp it in every detail, but his impression was that his gun was seized from his hands and fired; that it went off was certain, but he did not think it was his finger that had pressed the trigger.

Four men leapt from behind bushes on the other side of the path, and one of them produced a pair of handcuffs which were promptly snapped over Tackley's wrists. He made a violent struggle of it, and when this operation was completed he found himself lying flat upon the ground, and held there by three sturdy underkeepers.

The men kept him there, gently but irresistibly.

"Who have we here?" came the voice of the Squire. "Light the lantern and let us have a look at him."

One of the men lit the lantern, and the Squire brought it across to the fallen poacher and looked into his face.

"So, my friend," he said, "we have you at last! But what's this?"

This was the body of the head-keeper stretched face downwards on the turf. While the two men kept a grip of Tackley the others and the Squire turned over the body. As the lantern shone upon it Tackley saw that there was a big black mark on the vest, that blood was welling through the cloth, and that there was a pool of it on the spot where the keeper had been lying. The face was a greeny-white, the mouth was open, and the eyes gazed blankly upwards. Tackley's heart stood still. He had never disliked the head-keeper, nor would he willingly have been the cause of any man's death.

"This is a pretty thing that's happened," said the Squire stepping across to where Tackley lay. "I'm afraid your poaching days, my friend, are done at last."

"Well, Squire," replied Tackley, "I never meant to shoot him. It was an accident."

"I honestly believe it was," said the Squire, "but will a jury believe that too? The best thing you can do is to leave the country at once. Take this," he whispered, thrusting some money into the poacher's hand. "It will pay your fare to Southampton and get you a steerage passage to New York. I have a cousin there who for my sake will find you work to do, and I'll write you a letter of introduction to him and forward it to you at the Southampton post office. But don't waste time; every moment is precious."

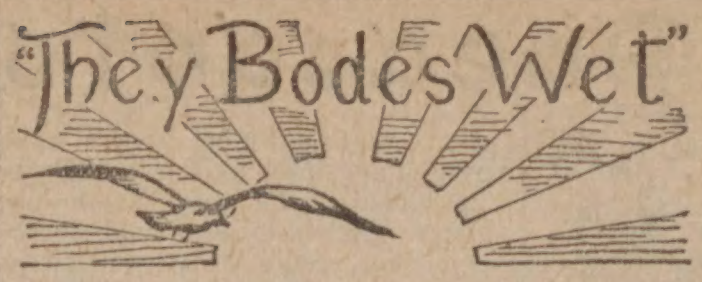
The Squire himself undid the handcuffs that fettered the other's wrists. Tackley rose to his feet, gripped the Squire by the hand and disappeared into the darkness, one of the keepers following him to make certain that he did not come back.

The Squire and his other keepers remained motionless till Tackley and his guardian were out of sight.

Then the head-keeper sat up.

"We've got rid of him at last, sir," he said to the Squire, "and your plan's worked finely, but I'm afraid this waistcoat of mine will never look the same. I doubted at first that he might notice the bladder I squeezed the pig's blood out of, and might guess that it was all a plant, but the darkness helped us wonderfully."

"I'm almost sorry he's gone," said the Squire.



WEATHER WISDOM FOR THE OUTDOOR MAN.

We do not dread rain if we are prepared for it, but it has a trick of catching us unawares. The weather glass is an unreliable prophet; to obtain an accurate forecast we must go to nature.

When trout leap clean above the surface of the stream, we shall have rain within a few hours, and you will observe at the same time another sign—the swallows skimming along close to the water.

In the fields the rabbits will be seen taking their supper earlier than usual before heavy rain, and if you examine the clover and chickweed on which they are feeding you will see that the leaves of the one and the flowers of the other are tightly closed.

When gnats are active and pugnacious, rain is not far off, for instinct prompts them to feed in anticipation of being kept prisoners beneath the leaves during the coming storm. So also when cows gather beneath the trees, or when lambs are inordinately frisky, take a mackintosh with you.

In the stable there are many portents of the coming storm. Horses whinny and fidget, the corn you give them feels clammy to the touch, and the cement floor looks as if it had been newly washed.

Dogs are given to burying bones before a rain storm, an instinct they have inherited from their wild progenitors, who were liable to starve if they did not lay in a store of grub in advance, for the game they fed on kept in hiding during the rain.

The steam from a railway train hangs heavily about the track before rain, and the distant hills seem close at hand.

Even in the house there are signs if you can read them. Glazed pictures and varnished wood become sticky owing to the dampness in the air, which will soon show itself in rain. If there is a globe of goldfish in the window they will be seen to dart about uneasily.

Snow is heralded by a strange greenish tint in the sky, and if this appears in the south-east you may be certain that the ground will be white by morning no matter what direction the wind is in.

A flecked or mackerel sky foretells the gale that will follow it within twelve hours; what direction it will be from it is impossible to say without the use of instruments, but you can readily tell the way the wind is blowing at present by watching the birds on the twigs; they always sit with their heads to the wind so as not to ruffle their feathers.

Suppose the morning is misty and you want to know whether it will clear up or turn to rain; look about till you see a spider's web on a hedge; if that is hanging with dewdrops the day will be fine.

Watch the sunset also. If the clouds are fringed with gold or red the next day will be fair.

During a spell of bad weather you may observe a patch of blue in the sky away to the north-west; that is a sure sign that the storm is spent.

If you lack the energy to make personal observation, consult the weather forecast in the London morning papers. Their chained prophets base their surmises on data supplied them by the Meteorological Office.

It is quite another matter to consult the barometer in your hall, for the amateur prophet has no way of finding out how the cyclones and anti-cyclones of the upper air are getting on, and they often give the weather-glass the lie.

A. RIVERS.

THE ONLY SON.

SOME HARD TRUTHS.

It is said that a man's best friend in his mother. If he is an only son he is not unlikely to find her his worst enemy.

She means so well—that is what makes her so dangerous, for, knowing that her intentions are good, her son yields to her wishes on all points rather than hurt her feelings.

From the outset the only son receives too much attention. As a child he is watched and tended continually, instead of being left at times to his own devices. Unless possessed of an inherent strength of character, he is likely to become pettish and selfish.

That is not the most serious aspect of the case. As a boy he is robbed of initiative. His mother is jealous of him. He is the embodiment of her love, and it gives her acute pain to find him thinking for himself. She does everything for him she can, and she wants to do his thinking also.

Sometimes she does it subtly. She moulds his thought without even allowing him to know she does so. Generally she decides on a profession for him—something she would have liked to go in for had she been a boy, and something that was, perhaps, a highly profitable business in her youthful days but not so now.

To inculcate a love for this profession is her first thought. Let us suppose that her choice is engineering. She will supply him as a child with mechanical toys and miniature locomotives. She will remark to friends in his hearing: "See how fond Charles is of his engines. I am sure he is going to be an engineer, and I certainly should like him to be one."

To the boy his mother is infallible. He believes that she has discovered in him an inherent talent for engineering of which he is himself unaware. She says he is fond of it, so he must be. Moreover should any doubt remain she has expressed a wish that he should be an engineer, and an engineer he will be.

When he reaches the age of seventeen he discovers that he has been allowing his mother to fool him. Then he finds that he is totally unsuited for the profession he has chosen. Possibly he transfers his energies to another, and is branded as a person without backbone. In any case, valuable years have been wasted.

Though a profession can always be changed, character cannot, for it is its owner's permanent and inseparable possession.

As a child his character has been warped. The things that bring out the beauty of a character are the small trials and difficulties of early life. The boy who is very poor but who stints himself of some small luxury in order that he may help a younger brother, is doing a thing which will tend to make him a fine man; the only son is never kept poor, for his station at least, and he has no younger brothers on whom to practise the beautiful faculty of unselfishness.

His mother also makes him soft. To think of his dangers if he engaged in such a rough game as football would give her extreme pain, and so he leaves football alone. The small injustices of school life, instead of being borne with equanimity, are reported to his mother, condoled, and magnified into heinous crimes. The boy regards himself as a martyr. He is cultivating a super-sensitiveness that will make after life a torture to him.

The one salvation of the only son is for him to marry as early as possible. Provided that with such a character as his has become he is able to find a really good wife, he may throw off the trammels that the loving hands of his mother have cast about his destiny.

Even after marriage the only son finds his mother still itching to re-attach him to her apron strings; she will order his household for him; she will dictate concerning his children, when they arrive.

For him to struggle against her is useless; he has been so long accustomed to yield. He must rely for his independence upon the tact of his wife. To use more stern measures would be unthinkable.

DAVID COOPER.

TOWN OR COUNTRY?

FOR THE TOWN.

As I write, there lies before me a printer's proof. On one side appears an interesting article; the other side is blank. That sheet of paper illustrates the difference between town and country life. The former is worth an intelligent man's attention, and will repay any effort he may make to understand it; the latter is void.

I spent a month in the country once, and it was more than long enough. Of my own free will I shall never go back again for more than half-a-day at the outside.

Why should I?

Here in town I have everything I can want. There are half-a-dozen music-halls and an equal number of theatres within fifteen minutes' walk of my lodgings, and my salary is sufficiently large to enable me to patronise them frequently.

If I do not want to go to a theatre I can have a stroll through the streets, which furnish an unrivalled entertainment in themselves.

Compare the glitter of the dazzling lights and the hum of merriment with the darkness and the silence of an evening in the country. There, I admit, you have nature; but the noblest and most interesting works of nature are living men and women, and three-quarters of Britain's whole population are grouped together here in the towns. People of every type pass you by; the laugh, the angry word, the sob ring in your ears. Here is human nature to be studied by all who have the mind to observe, and how could any brain be stagnant amid such surroundings?

But that may be only my own personal taste and inclination. Perhaps I have other and more practical reasons for being a town-dweller. Let me ask the working-man of the country—the farm labourer—what are his prospects in old age? If he tells me what he really believes and fears, he will say the workhouse. He has no chance of bettering his position, no opportunity of saving more than a few beggarly pounds, which will quickly melt away with the first few weeks of unemployment.

Now take the case of a young man in a big town. The world lies at his feet. If he fails to succeed the fault is in himself alone, and not in his surroundings. In most cases his old age will be provided for either by his own efforts, or by his paying in to some benefit society. He has the opportunity of turning his life to the fullest account; there is not to him that continual whisper: "What I could have done if I had lived in a town!"

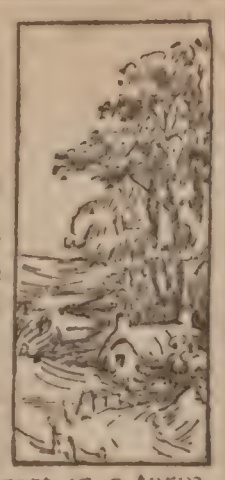
Passing from business let us review the aspect of physical fitness. I believe that statistics prove the countryman to be healthier and longer-lived than his cousin of the city, but is that everything? Would you rather live a month in prison than three weeks in happiness and prosperity? That is what it amounts to. The countryman may live a little longer, but what is life if it is wholly drab and uneventful and there is nothing to look back upon?

The greatest of all advantages a town has to offer is its freedom. The worker in the country is at the farmer's beck and call the whole day through; he does not get Saturday afternoon off for recreation; even on Sundays he cannot call his time his own, for he will have to take his turn in staying at the farm to look after the stock. He has to get up at an unearthly hour every morning, and must be abed by eight in the evenings to secure enough sleep. Is this the life of a free man or a slave?

Even apart from the demands of an employer there are restrictions in the country which are unknown in the town. Here nobody cares about his neighbour, and every man is free to lead his own life. In the country you are hemmed in by gossip, and your every movement is a subject for comment.

ROBERT IRVINE.

FOR THE COUNTRY.



Up to the age of twenty it was my misfortune to live in a city. Then came an illness, which now I bless, for it was followed by the physician's warning that I would not reach middle life unless I forsook the town forthwith.

I had a little money which had been left me by a relative. Part of it I spent learning farming; with the rest I purchased an interest in a farm, tenanted by an old man who had got himself into financial difficulties.

The sum I paid him removed the incubus of debt from the farm, and my practical training enabled me to make it pay. Moreover I made at the outset the condition that at his death I should succeed to all his interests, so far as the place was concerned. As a few years later he died, I now find myself with a farm of my own, and I am still well under thirty.

Do I want to return to the town? A thousand times no. Never till I came to the country did I fully realise what an excellent thing it is to be alive. My health is now, the doctors tell me, perfect; and they say I might safely go back to the city if I wished to do so. I laugh when they say that. Will a fly return to the spider's web from which it has struggled free?

I have heard it said that country life is monotonous. I do not find it so. There is as much to be done on the farm as I can manage—the men have to be kept to their work, crops and cattle have to be sold, necessaries have to be bought. Work which demands the best of a man's powers of organisation and scheming, cannot be counted dull.

Then in my leisure time I have a day's hunting now and again, and I am a member of the local Yeomanry. Whenever I have a mind to shoot rabbits they are ready to my hand.

A great proportion of my daily routine might come under the category of amusement.

I have to ride to a neighbour's farm to look at some sheep, fattening in a field which I have rented. I have to drive into market each week, and now and again the business of the farm demands a visit to the great town where I was reared.

All these goings to and fro are included in my ordinary work, and I venture to think that few townsmen could show a more attractive programme.

You may say we have no theatres. We haven't, and I for one don't want them. The theatre is an institution that loses most of its glamour when you have passed the age of seventeen. We have, instead, village concerts and dances, and an occasional political meeting; in them there is more fun than in any theatre, for in the one case you are taking part in what is going on, in the other you are only a spectator.

But I don't want amusements much. When my day's work is over I am thoroughly tired, and it is a fine thing to sit by the fireside enjoying the supreme luxury of a rest. I read aloud while my wife sews or knits, and I doubt whether you could find a pair of happier young people than we two.

Sometimes of an evening a neighbour will drop in to see us, and we have a merry little card party.

There is no restraint then. You know that your visitor is not trying to find out whether you are doing badly in business; you know that he would be sorry if he thought you were. Your wife knows that he will not carry home tales to his wife about your housekeeping; she knows that his wife would not thank him if he did.

Here we have none of that striving for social position, none of the back-biting and two-facedness that spoils the good-fellowship of town life. Out in the country we are all simple, whole-hearted people. We like each other, and life is very good.

T. W. GARDEN.

WATCHING FOOTBALL.

AN IMPARTIAL CRITICISM.

Every Saturday afternoon during the winter over a million people pay admission money to watch hired players play. This figure is striking, and has been made the text for many tirades against the now national pastime of watching football.

Of the million people who attend football matches, probably not more than one in ten can really play the game. Most have done so during their schooldays, but comparatively few have kept up the exercise on leaving school. Here, therefore, we have a million people not sportsmen but spectators of sport, and we have to ask ourselves whether or not this is a lamentable state of things.

It would certainly be desirable that the non-players in the million spectators should cease to watch and should begin to play, but for several reasons this is a condition of sport which is purely visionary. Enemies of the game speak of football watching as if it were a new and lamentable development. It is certainly new, but it has not supplanted anything better.

The working man never has been a practical sportsman. He cannot afford to be so.

His choice of amusements is limited, for he has to confine himself to those within the compass of his purse. For a body of working men to band themselves together, form a football club, rent a ground and purchase an outfit would necessitate an expenditure which none of them could afford.

It is doubtful whether it would even be advisable for the working man to play football on Saturday afternoons.

Busy every other day of the week, he has practically no opportunity of training, and to rush into a violent game once a week would prove seriously detrimental to his health. The breakdowns which are attributed to athletics are in most instances due to over-exertion following lack of proper training.

It might be argued that the untrained working man might play a nice quiet game of football which would not overtax his strength. Such a suggestion could only seriously be considered by a person who had never played football. Football is not a mechanical physical exercise but a sport, and it is impossible for a player not to become heated and enthusiastic while indulging in it; thus he will exert himself to his utmost and forget all about his lack of training.

The working man must do something on Saturday afternoons with his unaccustomed leisure. What is he to do?

In the old days the galleries of provincial theatres were packed on Saturday afternoons, but nobody condemned the patrons of the drama for watching instead of acting. At the present time working men spend the same money as they did on the theatre in obtaining admission to a football ground, and it is better for their health that they should be in the open air, even though they are sitting still, than in the stuffy top storey of a theatre.

To some extent the spectator does participate in a football match; he shouts, thus exercising his lungs, and keeping his mind active.

The working man, it must be remembered, is not a student. If he were a lover of books or learning he would not for long be a working man. Reading, therefore, cannot be regarded as holding much attraction for him. What alternative has he to watching some sort of spectacle? He may spend his Saturday afternoons drinking, and many working men do so, but I venture to think that the most virulent enemy of football would hesitate to say that he would be better drinking than watching the game.

We get, therefore, down to these hard facts; football is a good, clean and harmless spectacle, and for a moderate expenditure supplies the working man with complete relaxation and entertainment for a whole afternoon. It does not keep him out of bed, but it does keep him out of the public house.

A. G. HOWITT.

LONDON: HELL

II. SISTERS OF SIN.

And every woe a tear can claim,
Except an erring sister's shame.—BYRON.

There are three phases in the erratic course of the frail bark which has gone astray, degrees of helplessness, shades of shame.

"When we begin the life," one of these women once said to me, "we have good looks on our side, and we frequent the music-halls of the West-end, but we do not last very long, and by and by, as we grow less attractive, we must fly at smaller game; we promenade Piccadilly and Regent Street. Here again we do all right for a while, but in time we find ourselves not quite good enough to stand the brilliance of the electric light, so we drift down to the Strand, to Pimlico or to the suburbs. These are the three stages of the gay life."

"And after the Strand and the suburbs?" I asked.

THE RIVER.

"Oh!" she replied with a shrug of the shoulders and an almost imperceptible shiver. "When we are not good enough for the darker streets, what is the use of living on? Father Thames is always smiling to us with outstretched arms, and we know that he is the one who will see us home finally."

Let us trace frailty fair through these various stages.

Behind the five shilling seats of two music halls which I shall not name you will find a promenade. Those who sit on the lounge seats at the back of it can hear the singing and the music, but they cannot see the stage. They do not wish to do so. There is the tinkle of a hansom bell, and a girl, beautifully dressed in a robe that must have cost a hundred guineas and bears the hall-mark of the Parisian costumier, steps down from the vehicle and makes her way slowly and with some dignity up the marble steps, holding the skirts of her magnificent dress in either hand.

Well might the stranger be excused for admiring her as the embodiment of beautiful young womanhood, for at this stage she is new to the life of infamy, and the hall-mark of sin is scarcely visible on her features; but, though the stranger might be deceived, the cabman and the commissionaires at the door know her well and grin familiarly to her and she does not resent it.

DRINKING THE WINE OF INFAMY.

She pays her five shillings for admission and seats herself on one of the comfortable lounges at the back of the promenade, taking care that space is left beside her sufficient for the accommodation of the companion she hopes for.

There is a freemasonry amongst the sinful sisterhood, and she who first secures a good seat is considered to be entitled to its absolute possession.

Presently a young man, possibly from the country, passes by and the enchantress smiles upon him—not brazenly as she will do some day, but with simplicity, and one might almost say an appearance of innocence. He seats himself beside her, drinks are called for, and presently a commissionaire is ordered to fetch a hansom, the woman is handed into the vehicle, and her escort seats himself by her side.

She has paid five shillings to see the entertainment, but she has remained in the theatre only ten minutes. She would be regarded by others of her kind as lucky. Many of them will wait till close upon eleven o'clock without discovering a companion. Then they leave the lounge seats and step to the front of the promenade where men are standing smoking. Sometimes they will even take a step or two down one of the gangways, thus insuring that all the men leaning on the front of the promenade shall see them.

In one of the seats we see a young woman clad in widow's weeds. She is a pathetic figure, but her bereavement appears to sit light upon her. Doubtless all sorrow loses its keenness by repetition, and she is made a widow every separate morning. She discovered that the novelty of the weeds is nearly as attractive as the gorgeousness of the Worth costume, and the former is so very much cheaper.

DRIFTING.

When the last turn comes on the stage, the sinful sisters whose nets have caught no fish, do not wait for the rush that leaves the theatre; they betake themselves to certain restaurants so as to be there when the playgoers arrive. They order a glass of lemonade and pay from three half-crowns to half-a-guinea for it, the understanding being that the management will see that the table they seat themselves at is left their sole property for the evening.

Hither in a few moments comes a stream of men from the various music-halls and theatres. One young man in evening dress has been drinking more than he ought to. He seats himself beside the woman and orders a bottle of champagne. She smiles upon him with some genuine delight, for her fears have been proved groundless and after all her day has not been blank.

For weeks, sometimes for months—never for years—the beauty of the woman lasts and she can afford the gorgeous dresses. Then comes the day when she lacks the cab fare, lacks the five shillings to admit her to her hunting grounds, and she betakes herself to the parade of perdition which is free to all—the streets around Piccadilly Circus.

THE DESCENT.

The bitterness of the life she has long since come to realise. In spite of its paint, she cannot eliminate from her face the lines of cruelty which are dragging down her mouth.

Her silks and delicate gauzes have now been sold or pawned, but, no matter how small her purse, she still contrives to dress in some shade of white. The garb of chastity she has discovered has an alluring affect upon the unchaste.

The police forbid her to speak to anyone, but the sidelong glance, the little kick on the heel, is as expressive as the verbal message. She sees her intended victim, signals to him as she passes by, and stands to look into a shop window till he passes. The window is dark and acts as a mirror. She watches eagerly to see whether or not she is observed, and as he passes on without turning his head her lips curl in contempt.

She hunts actively now, for her business hours are necessarily short. In the theatre she had from 8 o'clock to 11; in Piccadilly she has but from 11-15 to 11-45, from the moment when the theatres disgorge their devotees to the time when the streets are again deserted.

WHEN SOUL AND BODY PART.

Finally the day comes, and it does not take long in coming, when the woman can no longer dress well enough for Piccadilly, nor would it help her if she could, for her face will not pass muster; and so she takes lodgings on the Surrey side and comes over Waterloo Bridge by 'bus or on foot to haunt the Strand.

The gilded youth and the wealthy provincial visitor is no longer her prey; she is contented with the mechanic, the clerk, and the tradesman whom she formerly despised. And the day is not far distant when even these small fry refuse to yield to her enchantments.

Then the woman, cold, hungry, weary of life, passes down Villiers-Street, up the little flight of steps and through the dark archway of Hungerford Bridge. The last train is steaming from Charing Cross to the clean, cool fields of Kent. The policeman beneath the arch looks the woman up and down, but she sees nothing except the shimmer of the lights on the water.

She walks along the bridge till she reaches the middle. Then she scrambles over the parapet and throws herself downwards. There is a terrified shriek as she realises that she has cast herself into eternity.

A moment later the waters have closed over her and the circling eddies grow wider and wider till at last they disappear. The frail bark has found its haven at last. The soul of a woman has taken its case to the highest court.

Whatever may be the view taken of this complex social question, there can be no two opinions as to the vileness of the organisation of vice which has been introduced to London from Germany. The German police have endeavoured to stamp out immorality in their cities, or at least to drive it beneath the surface, and the German scoundrels who exploited the women of their country at home have now discovered that London is a safer place for their operations.

IMPORTED WANTONNESS.

These souteneurs—or, as we should say in plain English, bullies—live at their ease in London and from time to time send an agent to the German towns to induce servant girls to come over here. Valiant attempts are made to suppress this white slave traffic, but the girls have at this time the appearance of respectability and, when they announce that they are coming to London as domestic servants they pass unquestioned.

From Germany we get vice in its worst forms. It is the German bully who has elaborated the sliding panel by which he can enter a locked room and rob the victim whom the woman has ensnared. It is he who has brought blackmailing to a fine art, he who has been responsible for the suicide of many a respected citizen that has made one false step.

You can see these men loafing at the corner of Shaftesbury-Avenue and in front of the Palace Theatre. The women they have organised are doing certain definite rounds, and the men know precisely which spot each one should be at at any fixed time. Occasionally the little groups break up and the evil looking foreigner walks down towards Piccadilly. One of the women has disappeared; she has gone home, and he, knowing what it means, follows.

It is not one in a hundred of these bullies who is ever brought to justice. Only on the evidence of the woman could he be convicted of living on her immoral earnings, and she fears to give that evidence. The bullies are banded together and, though one might be imprisoned, the woman whose evidence laid him low would be dealt with by the others.

OUR TRIBUTE FROM FRANCE.

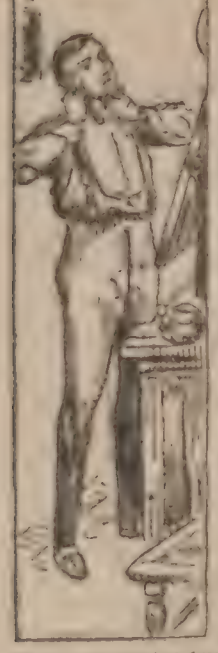
The French element also is an extremely dangerous one, though not in the same way. In France different views are taken of the problem from those we here entertain, and there the habitations of vice are licensed and under police and medical supervision. When the daughters of wickedness are discovered to be suffering from disease their case is immediately reported by the doctor after his daily examination, and they are warned by the police to clear out. Over they come to London, where there are no such restrictions.

It has been my purpose in this article to expose as far as the prejudices of English custom will allow the vice that soars rampant in the heart of the world's capital. I am well aware that more views than one are entertained in regard to this terrible aspect of modern life, but there is no doubt that though much has been done to purify the streets there is still much to do, and the first step to take is to pack the foreign bullies out of the country neck and crop.

STUART FREEMAN.

[*A further article of this series will appear next week.*—ED.]

SELF SHAVING



LESSONS IN A PAINFUL ART.

The number of men who shave themselves is rapidly increasing, for by doing this little operation for yourself you not only save money and time, but also avoid the risk, and it is a serious one, of being innoculated by the barber's razor with a disease from some other customer. Few men, however, know how to shave themselves properly. The first thing is the purchase of the tackle. A couple of razors, a strop, a shaving mug, a cake of shaving soap, and a brush are the requisites.

Let us first deal with the strop. Hang it not higher than your elbow. If a strop is hung above that level you cannot sharpen your razor correctly upon it, and you get a wire, or round edge. Let your strop be suspended from a hook of such a shape that there is no danger of it becoming detached, for should the strop slip while you are applying your razor to it you are liable to cut yourself seriously. When the strop is properly fixed, rub into it oil or vaseline till the leather will hold no more. Then rub the surface briskly with a flat bottle. This puts your strop in ideal condition.

THE PROCESS OF SHARPENING.

When you sharpen your razor, the strop should be held tight and the blade pressed flat upon the end of it nearest you. You should then draw it gently along the strop, turn it *on its back*, pull it towards you, and repeat the operation from six to a dozen times.

A razor must never be turned on its edge. The simplest way of remembering is to note that the back of the razor should never leave the strop the whole time.

With these preparations you are ready to begin work. The longer you lather your face the easier the shaving will be. Don't blame the razor if you have only spread the soap over your cheeks. It must be well rubbed in. Use warm water if your skin is fairly tough, but if your face is tender you will be much less liable to suffer from abrasions if you do the lathering with cold.

By dipping the razor into very hot water you expand the small serrations of its edge, thus bringing them closer together and producing a finer cutting surface. It has sometimes been said that dipping the blade in hot water destroys the temper of the steel. This is absurd, for the temperature of even boiling water is not high enough to draw the temper from the razor.

MOWING THE STUBBLE.

In shaving keep the razor as flat as possible, and take the stubble not straight but with a sawing motion. If you were cutting a wooden match with a penknife you would not merely press the knife against the match. You would at the same time draw it from one side to the other. That is the principle in shaving also. If you draw your razor gently to the side the stubble yields readily.

If your skin is tender you must always shave downwards, but if experience shows that no bad effects result, you will get a cleaner shave by working against the stubble when you are going over your face for the second time.

In shaving your upper lip keep it perfectly straight. It is worth while mentioning here that when you are being shaved by a barber you should on no account straighten out your lip. Let it remain in its normal position, for otherwise you are liable to be cut.

Should you be unfortunate enough to scratch yourself, apply a piece of alum to your skin. Slight wounds may be immediately healed in this way. After washing off the soap it is wise to apply vaseline or some other pure grease to the skin, to relieve the feeling of tightness which the soap leaves behind it.

When you have finished shaving your work is not completed. You must wipe your razor clean and dry and then strop it. The oil on the strop will prevent the edge from rusting. If you neglect this precaution the moisture which adheres to the razor will corrode it and destroy much of its usefulness.

Supposing that you shave every second day, you will manage to get along fairly well with a couple of razors, using them alternately, but it is better, if you can afford it, to have half-a-dozen. A razor improves by resting, the tiny particles of steel returning gradually to their proper position, and the edge thus regaining its keenness. If you use one razor every day you cannot hope that it will work satisfactorily.

H. NELSON.

PLANNING THE DAY.

The man who is fortunate enough to be his own master can plan out his own working day. He has the choice of two schemes. He can start just fairly early in the morning, work not too hard till lunch, have a long break then, work again, another break for tea, and work again till seven or eight.

The other way is to start sharp in the morning, stick at it hard all the time with only the minimum of pause for lunch, and get the day's work done so that he can leave off at five and have a good evening left for recreation. Which system is best the reader can judge for himself.

Even those who are under the thumb of an employer can in many cases made an arrangement with him so that, by shortening their lunch time to half-an-hour, they may leave half-an-hour sooner at night. The lunch need not be bolted; it only means that you have time to eat enough instead of time to eat too much.

This arrangement gives you a long evening to look forward to, and makes you work all the better; if your employer is approachable and the circumstances of your work make it possible, you might lay the idea before him.

CONVENTIONALITY.

We are the most conventional people on earth, and this trait of our national character is chiefly responsible for those defeats which we have to grin at and bear.

Until comparatively recently our jockeys rode in the way that their grandfathers had done before them, and it was only when the astonishing successes of the American seat showed us that we had dropped behind the times that we changed our methods. What we had always done must, we argued, be right, and we modified our style only when we found ourselves obliged to do so.

In the matter of rifle shooting we are far from being first-rate. Most men have the left eye stronger than the right, but convention demands that the rifle or gun be placed to your right shoulder no matter which eye is the stronger, and so the majority of men who shoot allow convention to deprive them of their best aiming powers, and it is a marvel that we are as good shots as we are.

Nobody holds a pen in the way that children are taught to do at school. Teachers know this, but continue to insist upon their pupils stretching out their fingers in a ludicrous and unpractical manner.

Conventionality is our chief curse in business matters also. Jews and foreigners open shops and follow methods which rapidly bring success, but which we will have nothing to do with because our fathers did not do business in that way—and that in spite of the fact that the methods I refer to are perfectly honest.

It is laid down as a sort of axiom that a boy whose parents belong to the middle-class should be either a doctor, a lawyer, a clergyman, or an officer. In most cases the boy's wishes are not consulted, and so we find a prevalent incompetence in these four professions. Possibly the boy wants to be an engineer or a shopkeeper, but conventionality is dead against him, and his wishes have to go under.

THE CARETAKER.

A SKETCH.

To judge him by his clothes would be to deceive yourself. They are shabby. Form your opinion rather from his person, which is portly and prosperous as that of an alderman.

When he listens as you speak, he has a way of holding his mouth open, as if he were drinking in your words; it is very flattering. His eyes look upon the world with an innocent surprise that would be convincing if it were not for the wily lines that circle them.

To the average money-grasping houseowner he appears a simple and trustworthy person; but if a prospective employer wants more than visual evidence, the man shows him army discharge papers which are satisfactory, and the bargain is clinched. Some say the papers were the property of a deceased brother, which is probably true.

He has a wife and many children, but it is not necessary to describe them. He is the dominant character of the family, and when you know him you know them all, except that they possess his qualities in a less marked degree.

His profession apart from caretaking is indefinite; he can play the fiddle a little, and occasionally he gets a pound a week to do it in a theatre band; he wood-carves well enough to make a few shillings when luck is black; when things come to the worst his wife takes in other people's soiled clothes. Really hard times are unknown to the family, for they always manage to have a roof, free of cost, above their heads; that is where the caretaking comes in.

He is not a clumsy operator. Never by any chance does he tell a possible tenant that the house is damp, or that there is a tannery not far away. He works on more subtle lines. The cupboards are a feature of the place, and he is at pains to open each and exhibit it. In the foot of one there is the carcass of a rat in the last stages of decomposition, and no one seems more surprised than the caretaker at the discovery; perhaps he really forgets for the time that he put it there.

Should the visitor have faith in some particular brand of rat poison, and announce that he will overcome this trouble, the caretaker will play, delicately, upon his superstition.

"Just shows what fools the people about here are, sir," he remarks casually. "Only yesterday old Bill Huckster told me we'd never get a tenant. For why? Only because there's been a death in each of the last six families that have lived in the house, and the place has got what you might call a bad name in consequence. But I say, as I said last night to Bill, as how there are some people as don't set no store by such-like things, and if only I can persuade you to take the house I'll have proved myself right."

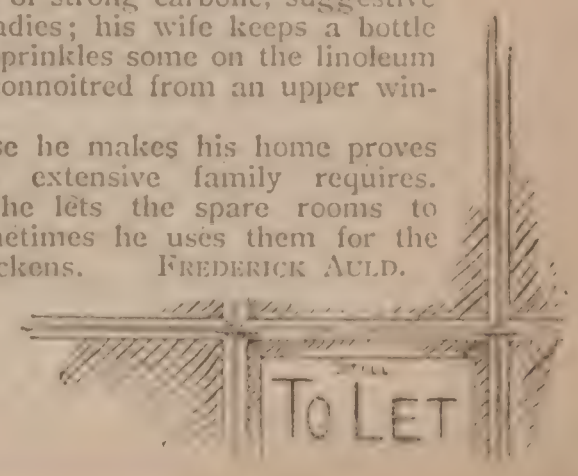
Usually this settles the business, though in most cases the prospective tenant gives the stairs or the size of the rooms as his reason for sheering off. Failing this, the caretaker has yet another card to play. He calls upon the landlord and whispers in his ear that the all-but tenant confided to his keeping the fact that he has bolted from his last house without paying the rent.

"'Taint for me to express an opinion, sir, but I thought it right you should know."

And the landlord thanks him warmly. His manner forbids suspicion.

Such is his procedure when he is at home and able to attend personally to business. When he is out he adopts other methods, for his faith in his wife's judgment and tact is limited. He smears the handle of the door bell with filth. Usually this keeps the people away, but, should they force an entrance, they are met in the passage with a whiff of strong carbolic, suggestive of infectious maladies; his wife keeps a bottle of the acid, and sprinkles some on the linoleum when she has reconnoitred from an upper window.

Often the house he makes his home proves larger than his extensive family requires. Sometimes then he lets the spare rooms to lodgers, and sometimes he uses them for the incubation of chickens. FREDERICK AULD.



ON The CROOK

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By GUY FORREST.

The three men looked in at the door of the railway carriage, sized Bertie Atherton up pretty accurately, and decided to enter. They seated themselves in the three unoccupied corners of the carriage, and had another good look at Bertie.

Bertie was rather like a bird. His mouth was diminutive, but what it lacked in size was made up by his nose, which was more than usually prominent. His eyes were large, and when he opened them wide his resemblance to a bird was apparent to the least imaginative person.

He was a young man who knew a good deal of the world and its ways, and he looked upon his fellow men with just a suggestion of challenge, for he felt that he was very competent to attend to his own interests whatever anybody else might do.

People were passing and repassing the door of the carriage, so one of the men pulled down the window and filled the gap with arms akimbo to keep them out. He looked what he was, a racecourse sharper, and the people on the platform did not exactly desire to share his company. Thus when the train finally pulled out, Bertie and the three men were the only occupants of the carriage.

"I learnt something to-day that I never knew before," said one of the men at length, "how to do the three card trick. One of these rogues who practice the game wanted me to put half-a-sovereign on the card I thought was the lady. I knew I should lose if I did, and so I made a bargain with him. 'Look here,' I said, 'I'll give you five shillings to show me how the trick is done,' and he agreed. I have not practised the trick, so I'm not certain I should be an expert at it, but I'm willing to give you gentlemen a demonstration as far as I can."

He searched in his pocket, but discovered that he had forgotten to bring any cards with him. This deficiency was made good by the man sitting opposite Bertie, and the demonstrator of the trick was just about to begin when the man who had lent him the pack stopped him.

"Look here," he said, "it's an absolute impossibility for you to bring off that trick if you only got the explanation to-day and have never practised it. There's a deal of sleight of hand about it that can only come by practice, and just for a bit of sport I'll bet you a sovereign that I find the lady."

The bet was accepted, and the man who owned the cards unearthed the lady without the slightest difficulty, and pocketed his own sovereign and another which he received from the demonstrator to keep it company.

"Let this young gentleman have a go," said the man opposite Bertie.

Bertie was willing, and, pulling out a £5 note from a pocket book stuffed with duplicates of it, he waited till the three cards had been arranged by the demonstrator upon the seat.

He had watched the handling of the cards carefully, and had observed that the lady appeared to be the card to the extreme left, but Bertie knew the trick and so he planked his £5 note on the middle card. It was the lady, and the demonstrator handed over five sovereigns.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" remarked that gentleman, as he thrust his hands into his pockets and looked vacantly out of the window.

By this time the train was slowing up for its first stop.

"Gentlemen," said Bertie, as he clicked the five sovereigns he had won, "I'm always open for a little bit of sport. There it was a case of this gentleman's skill against mine, but I propose that this time we should have some bet which chance and chance alone shall decide. Suppose we each stake £5 and have a guess at the number of telegraph poles on the north side of the line between this station and the next."

The three sharpers saw small opportunity in this for cheating Bertie, but, being born gamblers, they were ready for a flutter, and agreed.

Before the train started from that station Bertie made a note on a scrap of paper of the number each guessed. One man said 120, another 150 and the third 200. Bertie's guess was 247. When the guesses had been registered, the train moved off and the four men busied themselves counting the telegraph poles. 249 was found to be the exact number, and so Bertie pocketed £15 more.

He quite forgot to tell them that he had counted the number of poles on the journey down to the races.

The three sharps were now extremely anxious to recover their losses and fleece their victim of his gains without wasting any time about it, for the journey would not last for ever.

The man with the pack of cards proposed a nice quiet game of nap, but Bertie after examining the pack asserted that he quite understood the gentlemen were gentlemen, but on principle he never played cards with strangers except when they used a pack bought at a bookstall and opened for the first time before him.

The man with the cards was amenable to this proposal, and at the next station he got out, crossed over to the bookstall and bought a sporting paper which he thrust into his pocket. From another pocket he produced a pack the seal of which had been steamed up and gummed down again and every card in which had been marked with little scratches which the crooks knew how to read.

Bertie examined this pack, broke open the seal, and declared himself satisfied. As travellers may know, the cards sold at Smith's bookstalls are all of a pattern, and Bertie was quite pleased with these for they could not be distinguished from the four aces which he had hitched up his left sleeve, each ace being fixed there with a little bit of elastic and a clip.

When the train started, the game began. The sharps did not trouble to let Bertie have the usual preliminary win, for, as has been said, time was precious. But Bertie won without their permission or assistance. At the right moment he brought the most useful ace from its hiding place, slipped it in amongst the rest of his cards, and won easily. The cards were dealt again and Bertie was just on the point of slipping the ace of diamonds in amongst his when one of the sharps clutched him by the sleeve, and felt the two remaining cards through the thin cloth.

"You are a beauty," remarked the man, gazing at Bertie in open-mouthed wonder.

The man who was sitting beside Bertie got up, and the three sharps held a little conference at the far end of the carriage. One, with more force of character than delicacy of invention, suggested that they should simply attack Bertie there and then, rob him, and make a bolt for it at the next stopping place, but the man who had so unsuccessfully demonstrated the three card trick succeeded in persuading his companions to leave the further treatment of Bertie in his hands.

"You're a fly one," he said, seating himself opposite that young gentleman. "What a lot of money you would make on the crook."

"What a lot I do make," said Bertie. "I have a playful little way of counting the telegraph poles, the number of threads on the tassel of the window strap, and little things like that. It's awfully profitable."

"It's no use our hiding it from a man like you," remarked his companion; "we three are crooks, pure and simple. You seem to be a sort of gentleman player, a successful amateur, as one might say. We were just planning a very fine coup at euchre to-night, and we badly want somebody to help us. One of my pals here can't come, and we've just agreed that if you care to take his place we'd be willing to go shares with you."

Bertie smoked his cigar in silence, luxuriating in the sensation of being a master criminal whose assistance was coveted by the lesser fry.

"I don't care if I do," he said at length. "I'll do my little bit, but I must have not a third but a half of the proceeds."

To these terms the crooks agreed, and the two who were to accompany Bertie on the card-sharping expedition, explained to him what he would have to do.

"The man we're going for is a young millionaire who is stopping at the Savoy," said one of the men. "I was lucky enough to make friends with him, and being a champion euchre player he has challenged me to play against him for any stakes I like to name, or to bring any of my friends to play against him. Now I propose that you should play with him first. We'll see that this marked pack is used, and besides one of us will stand behind his chair and signal you his cards. Of course you play euchre?"

Bertie agreed that he was an expert.

"We can squeeze this young oof bird to any extent," continued the crook, "but he is a shrewd sort of chap, and he won't continue playing unless he wins a lot to start with. It will be necessary for us to lead him on, and so for the first few games you must play carelessly, take no notice of the marks on the backs of the cards and so make certain that he wins."

Bertie agreed to this proposal, and spent the rest of the journey learning to read the secret marks on the backs of the cards, and being instructed in the code of signals.

They dined together that evening, Bertie's education in the code being continued during the meal. Then he drove off to his rooms, changed into evening toggery, and met the two crooks at a certain public house. On being introduced to the young millionaire Bertie was delighted to find him most affable and quite lacking in conceit. There was no waste of time over preliminaries, for the millionaire himself suggested cards. Bertie was selected as his first antagonist, and the play began.

Bertie had won about £50 at the races that day, and had brought with him £150 more from his rooms. In less than twenty minutes he had allowed the millionaire to win the £200, and then he prepared to play in earnest.

Just then the millionaire's face became drawn. His eyes closed, and he fell forward against the table. The sharp who knew him best rang the bell, and a young man who appeared to be the millionaire's valet informed the assembled gentlemen that his master was at times subject to such fainting fits and would not be able to play again that evening.

"It's very rough on you," whispered one of the crooks to Bertie, "but you will be able to play him some other evening and get your money back."

Bertie wanted to rob the millionaire there and then, but this was impossible, for his valet would not leave him, and so together with the two crooks Bertie took his departure.

The whole inwardness of the business was not borne in upon Bertie, however, until a few days later when he met the millionaire and the three sharps walking together in Regent Street. Bertie followed them for a considerable distance, and when he saw the millionaire deftly remove a lady's purse from her hand-bag he realised the bitter truth that he had been let down and that the supposed magnate was but another crook. Bertie could not prosecute because his own part in the proceedings was none too creditable. He therefore wrote the £200 off as a bad debt.

Bertie is running a little straighter now.

Claims of all Sports

It is for many reasons impossible to say which is the best sport. So much depends on the time a man has at his disposal, on his physique and on the length of his purse. We have, however, prepared the following list in which will be found succinctly given the claims to consideration which may be made on behalf of our most popular pastimes.

BEAGLING.

Beagling is the inexpensive equivalent of fox-hunting. In keeping the beagles in view as they chase the hare you have to run over ploughed land, leap fences and squeeze yourself through thickets. The exercise obtainable is greater than that in the more lordly sport, for you have no horse to carry you but are dependent upon the fleetness of your limbs.

BILLIARDS.

Billiards is more than a mere indoor game. It is a physical exercise which demands a considerable amount of endurance. In the course of an evening's play you walk several miles round the table. Judgment, patience, delicacy of touch and accuracy of eye are rapidly cultivated. Doctors frequently recommend billiards to those suffering from liver complaints. The chief drawback to the game is that it is generally played in hot and badly ventilated rooms.

BOXING.

As an exercise boxing has the distinct advantage that it develops both sides of the body equally. It is specially useful to the busy man, for it enables him to compress into a quarter of an hour as much exertion as he would expend in an hour's enjoyment of other pastimes. Its usefulness in emergencies need not be emphasised. It also teaches its devotees to restrain their tempers.

CLIMBING.

The satisfaction in mountain—or hill—climbing lies in getting there. There are ever present the dangers of slipping or losing one's way in fog, but danger is almost inseparable from sport. It has been calculated that in climbing a 7,000 foot hill you do work equal to lifting a locomotive engine one foot from the ground.

CRICKET.

Cricket does not rank amongst the hardest exercises, and the long waits entailed in the game militate against its popularity. Nevertheless it would be impossible to experience keener excitement than to bat when you know that on your skill depends the fate of your side. In cricket there is every inducement to make the utmost individual effort, and in this it is unlike most other games which are played by sides.

CYCLING.

The fact that you can start from your own house and end there, and enjoy your hobby all the time, is one of the charms of cycling. You learn to be self-reliant when faced with such difficulties as mishaps to your machine, you enjoy the fresh air; you learn the geography of your own country in the best manner possible; and the constant change of scene has a stimulating effect upon the mind.

FISHING.

When playing a salmon you have for the moment exercise of a strenuous character, but fishing cannot rank as a favourable means for physical development. There is, of course, the walk to or from the river or sea, but from a physical point of view the chief claim of fishing is that it keeps you in the open air. The great advantage of fishing is that the sport does not monopolise the whole of the attention. The thinker can unravel problems and the dreamer dream dreams.

FOOTBALL.

In football we can give full vent to the animal instincts that are in us. It is the only sport in which you can hurl yourself upon an opponent and roll gleefully with him on the mud. It beats cricket in that during a game you are moving the whole time, and it is impossible for your interest to flag. In this game above all others you have to practice unselfishness and learn the advantages of combination.

FOX-HUNTING.

There is a bond of sympathy between man, horse, and hound as they arouse the echoes of the quiet country side. It is impossible to worry while you are following the hounds, and it is those who are most subject to worry, the wealthy, who indulge in this sport.

GOLF.

Golf is probably the most fascinating of all games. In a large measure this is due to the many niceties of play. The wind is constantly changing, and you have to make allowances for it; not two rounds are the same, and unexpected difficulties are constantly cropping up. Some idea of the difficulties of the game may be realised when it is known that there is a greater variety of weapons used in this game than in any other.

JU-JITSU.

The Japanese form of wrestling will appeal to those who live in cities and who stand in dread of being attacked by roughs. It will also attract the man who delights in physical tricks, but, as it consists of one long series of tricks, it does not offer very much entertainment as a sport.

POLO.

Polo has been called, and rightly, the best school of horsemanship. You must learn how to start and stop, how to twist and turn, and even those who have proved themselves clever riders across country have found it necessary to learn all over again when they entered the polo ground. Coolness and quick decision are amongst the mental attributes of the game.

QUOITS.

Nothing will more quickly restore the elasticity of overworked muscles than a game of quoits. While offering this advantage to the man who has already had hard physical labour, this game is also suitable for the clerk and other indoor workers. The quoits may be of almost any weight, and the throwing of them demands a fair amount of exertion. The game has a particular fascination in that a player who seems to be having things all his own way may be beaten at the very last moment.

RATTING.

Accompanied by a brisk terrier and a good working ferret, and armed with a short stick, you can do great execution amongst the wily rats of the barn or the hedgerow. This is one of the few blood-sports where the hunter may urge that he is doing mankind a service in exterminating his quarry.

RIDING.

With a good horse beneath you, care is left behind. Physically, riding is placed by most doctors in the very front rank of exercises, and it has every claim to such a position.

ROWING.

Rowing in an eight-oar boat is a joyful experience you are not likely to forget. As an exercise it strengthens the back, develops both sides equally, and, when a sliding seat is used, practically every muscle in the body.

RUNNING.

The novice at cross-country running feels after the first mile or two an almost unconquerable inclination to give it up, but he overcomes this, and so his pluck and endurance increase. Sprinting, or short-distance running, is excellent for the lungs, but should not be undertaken by anyone who has a weak heart. Long-distance running on the other hand may be indulged in by anyone, provided the pace is not too stiff.

SHOOTING.

The man with the gun has the never ending interest and satisfaction of pitting his skill against the unrivalled sight and hearing of the animals which he pursues. He braves all weathers and walks distances which he would have believed impossible. Shooting at the butts or at indoor targets has no claim as a physical exercise, but provides entertainment and trains the eye.

SKATING.

Smooth ice, a calm night, a bright moon and a winsome girl by your side—what pastime could be better than skating under these conditions?

SWIMMING.

Dr. Hawk after many experiments discovered that swimming increases the red corpuscles of the blood more quickly than does any other exercise. It helps deep breathing, it builds up stamina, and it teaches physical cleanliness. Its usefulness under certain conditions need scarcely be pointed out. It need not be dull if you join a water polo club.

TENNIS.

No one who has played a hard five set will say that tennis is a feeble game. It is one of the few pastimes in which the sexes can meet on an equal footing, but, though it can be played gently, a game may be made as hard and fast as you like.

WALKING.

One of the great advantages of walking is that it cannot be overdone. Next to horse riding it is considered the best exercise for building up strength. Holbein and many other athletes train almost wholly on walking. Its one fault is its dulness, but this can easily be overcome if you find an entertaining companion.

WRESTLING.

Agility, quickness and strength are rapidly acquired by the wrestler. It is one of the cheapest amusements, no appliances whatever being required. The risk of strain is not so great as is generally supposed. Provided you wrestle with men who are not overmuch your physical superiors, you have little to fear.

G. MILLER.

THE FIREMAN'S JOB.

BY A LONDON FIRE BRIGADE MAN.

When I was a boy I thought nothing could be finer than to wear a helmet and top-boots and dash through the streets on a galloping steamer, and I think so yet; ours is a job you've got to be in love with or you can't stand it at all.

To be a fireman you must have been a sailor, and you must be between twenty-one and thirty-one when you apply. The physique rules are not stiff: 5 feet 5 inches is the lowest height, and 37 inches the minimum chest measure; but they are strict about your inner economy. If your heart isn't just the best possible you don't get in.

You start with £1 4s. a week till you have completed your three months' probation. During that time you are supposed to learn how to fight fire, and the way they teach you is to make you scrub the floors and stairs of the station.

By and by your fire drill begins, and it will go on to the end of your days; for even the oldest hands can only be kept up to form by constant practice. In the yard there is a special building used for this purpose. When drills are on you have to swarm up a ladder and carry down a fainting maiden from the top storey, the maiden in this case being another fireman with a nightdress over his uniform, and it isn't fun carrying him down that ladder, the first time especially. You feel you will overbalance every moment, and it's quite possible you'll do it.

At the end of your probation you are appointed to another station at £1 6s. a week, and you may now consider yourself a regular fireman.

Twenty-four hours will be your working day, for you never know when you're to be wanted, and even your one day's leave each fortnight is liable to be stopped in the event of sickness amongst the rest of the staff.

They treat you differently in different stations. In some you have to take your sleep in full uniform, all except your helmet; in others they allow you time to dress, though that's not the general rule.

When a call comes an electric bells rings in your room, and the lights are automatically turned on everywhere. You get up, slide down the stairs, snatch your helmet from its hook, and are out with the engine within one minute from the first alarm.

Being a youngster you're always ready in time; the older hands manage to bungle things just enough to delay them and give you the chance. If it's a false alarm or a small fire the disappointment is yours; if it's something big the second engine is called out and the old hands arrive in time for all the fun. It's they who will mount the escapes and enter the building, and you will have to be content with very subordinate jobs.

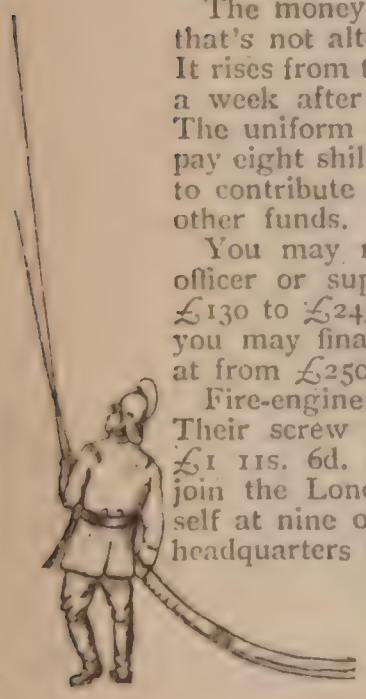
Even after you are reckoned an experienced man and get as much showy work as you could wish for, you'll find that it isn't so romantic as the books make out. You don't have cheering and admiring crowds when you're working knee deep in water, trying to put out a cellar fire. With the smoke in your eyes (and it does smoke in a cellar!) and your skin frizzling, you begin to see things on their seamy side.

The money you get is never very great, but that's not altogether what you're working for. It rises from time to time till you get £1 17s. 6d. a week after fifteen and a half years' service. The uniform is free, of course, but you have to pay eight shillings weekly for messing and have to contribute to widows', hospital, holiday and other funds.

You may rise to be station officer, district officer or superintendent at a salary of from £130 to £245 a year, and if you're very lucky you may finally become chief of a fire brigade at from £250 to £350 a year.

Fire-engine drivers need not have been sailors. Their screw starts at £1 4s. and rises to £1 11s. 6d. a week. Anybody who wants to join the London brigade should present himself at nine o'clock any Friday morning at the headquarters in Southwark Bridge Road.

R. WINTER.



MY NOTEBOOK.

NOVELTY IN SPORT. I number amongst my acquaintances several men who were at one time distinguished in a certain branch of sport but who in the course of time dropped it and have since degenerated into mere onlookers. They tell me they have extracted all the enjoyment that sport of any kind is capable of giving, but they are wrong. They have exhausted only that one branch of sport.

It is quite in the natural course of things that one should tire of a sport after following it for a year or two. You learn all the tricks, and you bring yourself to the maximum cleverness of which you are capable. When this stage is reached, interest begins to wane.

You can prove the truth of my assertion by glancing at your own past career. As a boy you played marbles, but at ten or eleven outgrew them. Then possibly you took up cricket or football and deserted it likewise. Later you adopted boxing or running, and finally dropped that.

The element of novelty is one of the chief attractions in any sport, which goes to explain why the bungling novice gets more fun from his pastime than does the expert.

My point is this. If you find your interest in a sport beginning to flag, drop it and take up something else. It does not matter a bit whether you prove a duffer in the new line. The main thing is to get entertainment from it.

THE COMMON MAN. There can be no doubt about it. He is bound to be happier than the man who is famous either for possessing other people's money or for having written dull books. The millionaire never knows the moment when a bread-knife may be buried between his shoulder-blades, and even the greatest politician gets more than he desires in the way of applause when the people throw brickbats at him.

The great artist, be he painter or writer, is a victim to introspection and nerves. He is a person of moods, with a supreme gift for discovering emotions whose existence other people hardly even suspected, and his gift is not to his own personal happiness.

The stalled ox has an uncommonly good time of it, viewed from the standpoint of a stalled ox, and the navvy, provided he has a softish job, has practically all he wants. Ambition and discontent saunter along hand-in-hand. They are twin-sisters, and the latter insists that you have her, too, if you make eyes at the other. I am doubtful if they are such a very lovable pair as they are usually represented to be.

TOO MANY RULES. There is a tendency on the part of those who direct our games to create too many complicated rules. A game ceases to be amusing, and begins to resemble a problem in chess, when you hedge it about with laws and conditions of nicety. Many a man who as a boy kicked a tin down the street with much satisfaction, has never taken up football because its rules and complications make it a mental as well as a physical task.

It is the lack of all rules which account for the rising popularity of those pastimes which are generally described as sports to distinguish them from games. In cycling, for instance, you are hampered by no rules except the elementary ones imposed by the police for the safety of other users of the highway. You can employ ankle action or you can do without it; your gear may be sixty or a hundred according to your personal taste. There is none to say you nay. So with swimming, running, walking.

Some day, doubtless, the Amateur Athletic Association will swoop down in a moment of superfluous energy and create an infinite number of rules to hamper these sports. When they do they will inflict a serious injury upon each pastime so tampered with, for many of us like a thing just so long as we are allowed to do it in our own way.

FOR ROUGH ROADS. Here is a hint which may be useful to my cycling readers. When you are riding over an uneven piece of road you can eliminate most of the jolting by a movement similar to that which the horseman calls rising in his stirrups. Set your bicycle at a fair speed, and, when you come to the rough section, free-wheel.

By pressing on the pedals you can raise yourself till you are standing upon them, not so high as to upset the centre of gravity but just enough to bring you a fraction of an inch above the saddle. The pedals should for this operation be half-way down in each case, and not one down and one up.

The knees being bent act as vibration absorbers, and I am convinced that so poised you could ride in comfort over unblinded macadam, although for the sake of my bicycle I have never ventured to make the experiment. This little trick is useful chiefly where you have to cross a road that is deeply rutted, or have to ride over a part that has been badly scraped and left lumpy.

MY SHORTEST HOUR. An acquaintance of mine was discussing with me the other day a rather interesting subject. He wanted to know which hour of the day I found the shortest, and a little explanation proved to me that his enquiry had no reference to that complex question, "Shall we put the clock back?" so I heard him patiently.

Although each hour has its sixty minutes, I am bound to say that I find my first hour at the office to be the shortest of the whole day, and the one immediately before lunch to be the longest. I endeavour at all times to adapt myself to circumstances, and therefore when the editorial teeth ache or need stopping I fix the first hour for a sitting at my dentist's, and when I have to interview a bore I give him an appointment about that time.

My mind has, I suppose, got into a groove in this matter through the wear of daily routine, but I find it very useful to have an apparently short hour in which disagreeable business may be transacted.

When lady visitors express a desire to see me, I invariably ask them to call during the hour preceding lunch.

Ahem!

STANDING TREAT. I wonder whether the stupidity of the present system of standing treat has ever struck you? Three men happen to meet in a public-house. At once there is a dispute as to who shall stand treat, and finally one insists upon the honour. He pays for the three glasses, and the other two men toast him as if he had presented them with at least gold watches.

So far, good. Next one of the other two stands treat all round, and his companions toast him with as much ceremony; finally the third man stands treat, and the ceremonial is repeated. It comes to this that each man has had three drinks, and each man has paid for three drinks. Very probably he only wanted one, or at the most two, but if one of the three did not stand treat he would have looked upon himself as a cadger and would probably have been so regarded by the others.

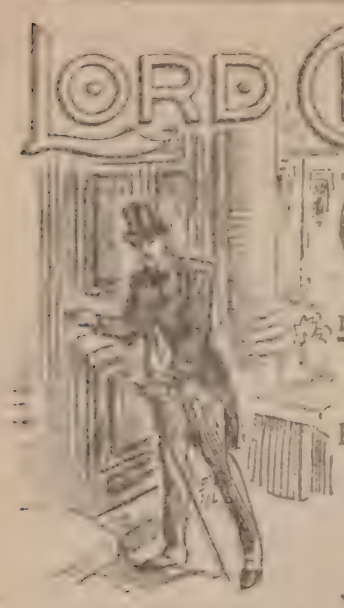
It is an ancient tradition and too tough I fear to be killed by anything I may say, but I am convinced that it would be infinitely better if amongst one's immediate friends at least one had an understanding that each should pay for his own drinks.

Such a system would effectually prevent a man from drinking more than he wanted to. Few people get drunk when they pay for each individual drink. It is the courtesy system that fills the police courts.

YOUR EDITOR.

Westinghouse Building Strand, London.

LORD CHILWORTH: CRIMINAL.



REMARKABLE SERIES OF COMPLETE STORIES.

By J. PRESTWICK SHEED.

II. THE EPISODE OF THE SPORTSMAN.

"This," said Chilworth, "settles the hash of our friend Sir Morton Bayley. His horse Dragonfly, entered for the third race at Sandown yesterday, was scratched while the first race was actually in progress. It was a hot favourite and there is no doubt that he has made a very fat sum out of the incident. I have had my eye upon him for quite a long time.

"You may have noticed how badly his horses have done at all the little country meetings, and how much they have invariably improved when entered for anything big. The man is a disgrace to the turf, but he keeps just on the right side of the wind, and the Jockey Club can do nothing with him. How fortunate it is," he added, "that we are not hampered by similar restrictions!"

I got down Burke and turned up the short biography of this racing baronet, reading it out to Chilworth.

"Engleford Lodge?" he mused, when I mentioned the name of Sir Morton's country seat. "I seem to have heard of that place quite recently."

He thought deeply for a moment, and then jumped to his feet.

"I've got it," he cried, "I'm hanged if a full description of the electric burglar alarm, which a certain firm recently fitted to that house, was not given in a pamphlet they sent me the other day! It ought to be somewhere in the bookcase."

A brief search revealed this interesting booklet, copies of which an enterprising firm of electricians had distributed amongst owners of big houses with a view to doing further business. I suppose they salved their conscience—if a firm has such a thing—by reflecting that the diagrams, being sent to the wealthy only, could not fall into the hands of the unscrupulous. Like other people they were liable to error.

It appeared that they took a special pride in the installation which they had fitted within and around Engleford Lodge.

"Every door and window," their pamphlet informed prospective clients, "is fitted with electric wires, and if a burglar endeavoured to force an entrance he would immediately sever the current and thus illuminate the whole of the building outside and in, besides setting in motion a dozen powerful bells in the north and south towers, which would alarm the countryside for miles around."

That morning I visited a public reference library and, with the assistance of the young man in charge, discovered some interesting facts concerning Sir Morton Bayley, one being that he had the finest collection of sporting trophies in this country.

"There," said Chilworth, when I returned to him with my report, "is exactly where we shall strike him. That is his tender spot."

A collection of cups, if it is to be described as a record one, is bound to be bulky as well as choice, and the conveyance of these trophies to London would not be a light undertaking. We reviewed many plans and finally decided upon using Chilworth's touring car, the body of which was large.

In it we set out by noon and reached Midchester by three o'clock—I regret that the circumstances of this story compel me to conceal the exact locality of the little town. Before descending the hill that leads into it, we splashed the number plate of the car with mud in order that, if our scheme miscarried, there should be no danger of identification.

A policeman directed us to Engleford Lodge.

I remained with the motor in the roadway while Lord Chilworth presented himself at the house, professing to be a London picture dealer who had been commissioned by an American client to approach Sir Morton regarding a Gainsborough which he was reputed to possess.

The baronet was not selling, but Chilworth had deftly approached him on his blind side, for he was a man who prided himself on his possessions. He invited the supposed dealer to inspect the picture, and Chilworth's obvious admiration induced him to follow this up by exhibiting his sporting treasures. Chilworth was amazed at their beauty, or pretended to be, and he marvelled that nobody had ever thought of stealing them.

"Let them try it," said the baronet.

He turned a switch in the room where the cups were kept and then opened the window. What happened I could readily see from the road. The day was a dull one, but the house immediately glowed as if bathed in the brightest sunlight, illuminated by hundreds of electric bulbs hidden beneath the stone cornices and window sills, while the clangour of the bells was deafening.

Chilworth tried to lead him on further, and endeavoured to find out whether there was any weak spot in the armour, but the baronet became cautious and brought the interview to a close.

When Chilworth returned we drove the car slowly along the road that encircled the grounds of the mansion. They were separated from the roadway only by a small wire fence, but on the other side of this extended a great belt of holly bushes, growing so close together that it was quite impossible for any one to force an entrance through them. The only possible way of getting in after nightfall appeared to be by one or other of the gates, but on looking at these we saw that each had wires running along the top of it and connecting it with the gatepost, so that either to open it or to climb over might set in action the alarm which was the pride of the baronet and the electricians alike.

"This," said Chilworth, "seems to be a poser. Let us have a breakdown, and while we pretend to mend the car we shall be furnished with an excuse for taking a closer look."

The solution which we eventually found to our difficulty seems obvious and simple enough, but I can assure you that it took us a good half-hour to hit upon it. We motored on to the next town and dined, and at eleven o'clock that night the car pulled quietly up outside the holly hedge that skirted the baronet's demesne.

We had brought with us a stout rope, and, hitching one end of this to one of the uprights of the fence, Chilworth held the other, and climbed a tree that grew at the edge of the shrubbery. He made his way along the lower branches of this tree to those of another, and from there to a third. When he had reached the last he had passed over the belt of holly. We now had a bridge of the most primitive kind, but one which would be of great assistance to us in case of having to make a quick retreat.

Armed with a few simple tools, and each with a large net round his shoulders, we made our way in safety over the branches of the trees, using the rope to hold by. On reaching the house we had no difficulty in discovering the spot where the cable was buried, for the electricians' pamphlet had plainly shown it running from the end of a flight of steps close past a tree and on to the power house.

In less than five minutes we had unearthed the cable and cut it through, rendering the alarm completely ineffective.

We went to the window of the room where Chilworth had seen the cups, and in a moment we had slipped the latch with a penknife; apparently relying on the electric alarm, Sir Morton had not troubled about the fixing of up-to-date window catches. Chilworth slipped over the sill and I followed him. Then he drew an electric torch from his pocket and flashed it round the room.

I could scarcely repress an involuntary exclamation of surprise at what I saw. Lying peacefully in a hammock, which was slung between the mantelpiece and the doorway, was an enormously fat man.

Chilworth whispered to me that he recognised him as the butler, and doubtless he slept there to make assurance doubly sure. We should have liked to have chloroformed him or rendered him in some way insensible, but we had no sort of drugs with us and to have knocked him on the head would have been rather rough luck on the man. We decided to carry out the robbery as quietly as possible and let him sleep on.

We filled first one net and then the other with gold and silver cups, and then I dropped into the garden while Chilworth passed them out to me. Each with a net over his shoulder, we then made our way across the lawn to the rope stretched amongst the trees. The task was not an easy one for the cups were very heavy, but we eventually deposited the haul in the car without mishap. Then we returned to the room and again brought forth two netfuls of plunder.

Still the butler slept on.

We had filled our nets for the third and last time, leaving not so much as a goblet behind us, and were making our way cautiously and quietly over the lawn when Chilworth slipped on the turf, which was wet with dew. In his effort to right himself he released the net for one moment, and it clattered to the ground.

Instantly there was a cry of "Thieves! Thieves!" proceeding from the room we had just left, and we gathered that the somnolent butler had at last been aroused.

He flashed on the electric light (for apparently the lighting installation was separate from the other), and we could see him standing in front of the window staring into the darkness after us. Another moment and lights were springing up all over the house.

"Quick!" cried Chilworth, "we must not be done at the end of the game."

With that he picked up his net, and together we ran towards the holly, but, look where we might, we could not see the end of the dangling rope which showed us where the trees gave us a passage way. Chilworth ran in one direction and I in the other, flashing our torches against the trunks in the hopes of recognising the one that would lead us to safety.

"There they go," cried a deep voice, "after them, my boys! £50 to the man who collars one."

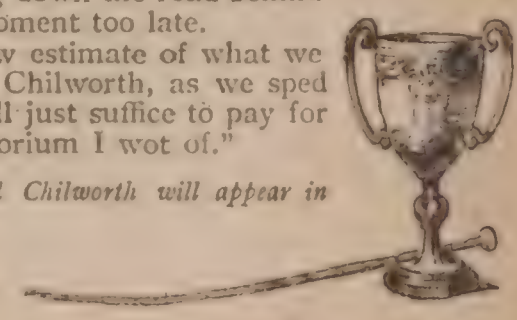
Men came rushing from the front door and from round the ends of the house, and I began to think that there must be an ignominious end to our criminal career when suddenly I found the rope which we had overlooked in the excitement. Catching hold of it, I sprang on the branch of a tree, holding out my hand to help Chilworth after me.

How we kept our footing on the branches—for they were slippery with the moistness of the night—I do not know. It seems like a dream when I look back upon it, and the anxiety of that short journey is a thing I have no desire to experience again.

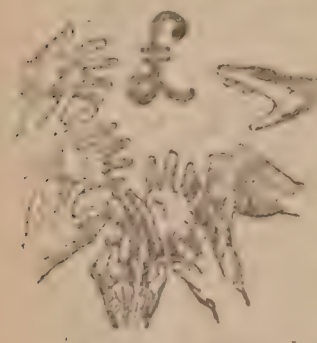
It is sufficient that we pitched our two burdens into the car and were already under way when we heard the catch of the gate and saw Sir Morton's servants rushing down the road behind us. They were just a moment too late.

"Two thousand is a low estimate of what we shall get for these," said Chilworth, as we sped towards London. "It will just suffice to pay for the completion of a sanatorium I wot of."

[*Another adventure of Lord Chilworth will appear in next week's number.*—ED.]



BUSINESS IS BUSINESS



A WEEKLY FEATURE.
Conducted by
R. A. MACNAUGHTEN.

The race is run by one and one, and never by two and two.
—KIPLING.

DISHONESTY IN TRADE.

I know just one man who has built up a fortune from dishonesty. Many years ago he purchased a play from a struggling author for a £5 note, on the understanding that the author should have in addition five per cent. of the net profits.

This play was duly staged at a London theatre, where it ran for a remarkably long period and brought its producer a fortune of over £50,000.

The agreement with the author was not in writing, and the producer refused to pay him the £2,500 which was really his. Under the circumstances there can be small question that this sum, and perhaps a very substantial bonus as well, should have changed hands, but the £5 note was all the creator of the play ever received.

The man who produced that play is now a great theatrical manager, and has multiplied his first thousands many times.

That is the one example of dishonesty prospering that comes within a wide experience of business life. Examples of dishonesty spelling disaster might be multiplied endlessly. Here is one which happened to affect myself.

I held a considerable number of shares in a certain company which publishes papers of all kinds. You may remember that a few years ago the gambling instincts of the pubiic were pandered to by the offers of various proprietors to pay large sums for certain 'bus tickets.

The manager of one of the papers published by that company determined to create a bigger sensation than was justified by the sum set aside for the purpose. Had all the numbers which he offered to purchase been genuine, the finances of the paper would have been seriously strained, for he was offering something like £500 a day. As a matter of fact, however, the tickets which he promised to buy were chiefly those which had been purchased by his agents, and which he now held securely locked in his desk.

He thus offered to buy from the public certain 'bus and tram tickets, which he knew the public could not sell him. He enticed people to buy his paper in order that they might discover which tickets were wanted. He was thus doing a highly dishonest thing.

A rival paper investigated the matter and exposed the whole fraud. That it was a fraud was evidenced by the fact that the paper concerned did not institute any proceedings for libel.

This dishonesty on the part of one individual seriously affected the profits of the whole firm. Other publications issued by them depended largely upon their competitions for circulation, but the faith once broken with the public has never been fully restored, and the interest in all the competitions conducted by that firm takes a second place to those run by papers with far smaller circulations. Much has been said about the sharp practices in journalism, but this instance would not appear to show that they are profitable.

It was at one time a favourite trick of grocers and chemists to supply their customers with a cheap imitation of an advertised article instead of with the article itself.

They resented the competition of the advertising manufacturer, and they considered it an excellent move to turn his advertising to their own direct profit.

Those who practised this system most extensively have now put up their shutters. Instead of resting content with the substitute, the public betook themselves to other establishments where they could obtain exactly what they asked for, and what they meant to have.

Dishonesty again, which did not pay.

Dishonest practices may be profitable in such businesses as are not directly dependent upon public support, but in all trades where the public are the immediate customers, the quickest road to ruin is for the tradesman to break faith—in other words, to be dishonest.

THE QUESTION OF DELIVERY.

I want to give the small shopkeeper a hint to enable him the better to compete with the big shops. One of the advantages of dealing with a big shop from the customer's point of view, is that it possesses a perfect system of delivery. Knowing this, the customer does not hesitate to request the big shop to send him a parcel however small.

The ordinary tradesman may have facilities for delivering goods, and be perfectly willing to give his customers the advantage of them, but customers do not know without inquiring whether he can send their goods home or not.

And so the customer will sometimes take away a parcel at some inconvenience to himself, for he may have to carry it about to various places before he returns home; then he bethinks himself how much more pleasant it is to deal at the big shop where you know that the management will not be put to inconvenience in delivering your parcels. The small tradesman should therefore make a point of asking every customer, no matter how small his purchase, whether he may have the pleasure of sending it home for him. To wait for the customer to make the request is not good enough.

THE STRAIGHT LOOK.

Amongst the foolish advice which is given to seekers after success is the precept: "Never trust a man unless he looks you squarely in the face."

Experience has shown me that, if a man is going to lie cleverly, he starts off by looking his victim full in the face. It is a very amateurish liar who flinches when he is telling a lie.

On the other hand one of the most honest and straightforward men I know scarcely ever looks anyone in the face. He squints at the carpet, or looks somewhere about the top button of your waistcoat, but his schemes are as just as the most righteous could desire.

WHERE TRADE IS DULL.

There has been a boom in the building of shops throughout the suburbs of London and most of our large provincial towns. The ground floors of houses have been knocked out and shops built in, and other emporiums have sprung up in the midst of rows of villas.

If all the houses were let there might be a fair living for the majority of the occupants of the shops, but all the houses are not let.

The tradesman who takes such a place is given to understand by the agent that he is a pioneer in a growing district, that he must not expect too much at first, that his trade will soon be flourishing. Many a suburb is anything but a growing district. It is the creation of the speculative builder, and it depends on many things, train services amongst them, for its popularity. Moreover the tradesman in such a suburb has to compete with the vans from the big city stores.

A man who is starting a small business should leave this pioneering to those who can afford to lose, and should content himself with a business of a less speculative character in a densely populated neighbourhood where a fair amount of trade is certain.

WHOLESALERS' CREDIT.

THE QUESTION OF SPOT CASH.

The bulk of the business of this country is done on credit, the usual system being for the wholesale merchant to allow the retailer three months in which to pay his bill.

Like many another trade custom, this is accepted by the majority of shopkeepers without being given any consideration whatsoever. I invite those whom it may concern to review the problem in all its bearings with the object of increasing their profits.

Let us take as an example the case of a merchant whose terms are "three months or 2½ per cent. discount for cash."

Suppose that you are a shopkeeper whose monthly account with this merchant is £100. By paying spot cash you settle your bill for £97 10s. 0d. This means that your total payments for the twelve months amount to £1,170.

If on the other hand you take advantage of the three months' credit, as most shopkeepers do, you will have to pay your £100 in full twelve times in the course of a year, making a total of £1,200. The difference is £30.

This £30 is not absolute profit. The capital necessary for the conduct of your business on the three months' credit system was £100. The capital necessary for paying spot cash is £300. You have therefore been given £30 as interest on your increased capital of £200.

This works out at fifteen per cent., which is a very good investment for you. Even if you have to get the assistance of your banker to enable you to pay spot cash, he will only charge you £12 per annum for the use of this additional £200, which leaves you with a clear £18 profit.

The instance I have cited is that of a comparatively small shopkeeper. In the larger businesses where the overturn is ten times as great as in the case we have just considered, the saving by paying cash would amount (even after paying the banker's charge) to £180. This would in most cases be sufficient to pay the rent of a large shop, in provincial towns at least.

There is another advantage in paying spot cash. You are left absolutely independent of your wholesale merchant. He cannot send you goods of inferior quality or charge you excessively for anything, because you could at once transfer your custom to another house.

Moreover it is a constant worry to many a shopkeeper how he can maintain the confidence of his wholesaler, but the man who pays spot cash has no need to trouble himself about this. He courts no confidence; he asks no credit.

The saving can be turned to good account in building up your business. You can either lower your prices and thus attract additional custom, or you can devote the sum to advertising, or, as I have already suggested, pay your rent with it.

It is by closely watching these apparently insignificant items that the shrewd business man finds himself able to afford alterations to his premises, additions of a speculative character to his stock, the opening of a branch, and a hundred other things which are extremely useful but which his careless competitor can never afford.

Money has a varying price, but it is always worth a certain amount of interest. If your money is not earning this interest for you, pay the wholesalers' bill and get it that way.

Where no discount for cash is given, on the other hand, I should on no account recommend the shopkeeper to pay at once. Let him avail himself to the full of the three months' credit given him.

In some cases wholesale houses resolutely refuse to give discount for cash. They deal only with shopkeepers whose credit is established, they have plenty of money in hand, and they refuse to make this substantial discount for obtaining additional cash of which they have no immediate need.

The shopkeeper should therefore take advantage of the three months' credit, or else transfer his dealings to another house which will give him the discount.

L. ABRAHAMS.

The Subalterns' Court-martial.

A WAY THEY HAVE IN THE ARMY.

I am not likely to forget the first subalterns' court-martial I attended, I am glad to say not as the prisoner. It was shortly after I had joined the Army, and the offender in this case was a lieutenant who had been guilty of the heinous offence of speaking slightingly of his regiment. He had been dining at the mess of another regiment, and in the course of the conversation a comparison had been drawn between that regiment and his own, and he had admitted that he would have preferred to belong to the other. This in time reached our ears, and we determined to punish him for his infidelity.

One night, shortly after he had retired to bed, there filed into his room a solemn band of his fellow officers. He was dragged from beneath the sheets, and made to stand on a chair. The court was then appointed, and a friend to defend him was nominated; needless to say the man chosen for this purpose was the dullest officer amongst us. His trial was short, he was found guilty and was sentenced to jump out of the window.

EXECUTING THE SENTENCE.

As his window was some thirty feet from the ground, and as the courtyard beneath was very hard, the prisoner reasonably felt some reluctance at carrying out the sentence, for he knew that his limbs, if not his neck, would in all probability be broken.

We waited for him to obey the mandate of the court, but he flatly refused, and so we hoisted him over the window sill in spite of his kicks and struggles, and then let him go.

He must have had a pretty useful fright during his fall, but that was all the damage he sustained, for we had, before commencing his trial, brought a cart piled high with hay and stationed it below his window. On to the top of the hay he fell and sustained, of course, not the slightest damage, but he learned his lesson.

Just once during my experience have I taken part in actually ragging a man out of the regiment. He was a most offensive person and had joined the Army at a time, a few years back as you may remember, when the Army stood sadly in need of officers, and when commissions were issued to all and sundry. He had been transferred to us, and nobody seemed to know why he had left his previous regiment, but we soon began to guess.

THE BOUNDER.

I can best describe him as belonging to the worst type of bounder. He had none of the feelings of a gentleman, he was no sportsman, he was not fitted for the command of men, he was in every way likely to lower our regimental prestige. Moreover he gave himself endless airs of superiority, because he was a graduate of some university, a qualification which had been largely instrumental in his securing his commission.

The regiment was not a snobbish one, and, although he was obviously a person of a different social class from that of the rest of the officers, still we should have raised no objection had he not insisted upon making himself disagreeable, but this he did do, and we decided that it was necessary for our peace of mind to induce him to transfer his services elsewhere. This decision was only come to after the colonel had talked to him seriously about his behaviour, and no improvement had resulted.

The first thing we did was to enter his rooms when he was absent, pack up all his boxes and bags, and label them with the name of a town in the west of Ireland. This was a gentle hint that we should be glad if he would take himself as far away from us as possible, but it was disregarded, its only effect being that he made a complaint to the colonel

Our next step was to "send him to Coventry," which means that none of us spoke to him except on duty. To a man of any sensibility treatment of that kind is unbearable, but the subject of these remarks had a very thick skin, and still made no sign of seeking to be transferred.

MILD HINTS AND OTHERS.

The mess then wrote to him offering to pay for his new uniforms and all other expenses if he would only request the authorities to transfer him to another regiment. His reply was to forward the letter to the War Office.

On the following day we made a circuit of the flower shops and nurseries of the town and bought up all the cactus plants that were to be had. The pots and earth we threw away, but the plants themselves we placed between the sheets of his bed as a floral offering. Whether he lay down on them or not we never knew, but he still showed no sign of leaving.

Then some genius remembered that a certain London provider had once boasted of having supplied a pint of live fleas, and so we wrote to the Zoo and to several importers of wild animals requesting to have the monkeys combed, and to have as many fleas as could be secured sent to us. To the senior subaltern fell the duty of taking the various bottles in which the fleas arrived and emptying them into the bed of our unwelcome colleague.

At last success crowned our efforts, and we learned next day that he had sent in his application to be transferred, and he duly left.

Our action in these two cases I consider justified, but there came within my experience one instance of bullying.

The victim of it was a youngster who had newly joined the regiment. He made the usual mistakes in breaking through the sanctity of various traditions, but he always paid the prescribed penalty by standing drinks round.

A WELL-MEANING YOUNGSTER.

Sometimes his mistakes were carefully engineered for him, as when a lieutenant sitting next him hitched the wrong hook of his belt to his sword. When he rose from the table his sword accordingly fell by its own weight out of the scabbard, and lay naked on the floor. It is an honoured tradition that a naked sword shall never be seen in the mess-room, and the transgressor of this rule has immediately to treat every man in the room to a drink, but in this case as in all others the youngster paid up with the best of grace and good humour.

The general opinion concerning him was that he was a thoroughly good sort, and likely in time to make a very efficient soldier, but somehow or other an enmity seemed to spring up between him and some of his immediate seniors.

The man who had unhitched his sword took the lead in persecuting the new comer. It was impossible to find any serious fault, but the youngster's very readiness to pay up on all occasions gave his persecuters an opportunity for saying that he was making an undue display of wealth, and for this they determined to court-martial him.

TURNING THE TABLES.

I would have nothing to do with the matter, for I felt that the accusation was unfair.

The sentence of the court in this instance was that the prisoner should be laid across the knee of one of his tormenters and slippered in grandmotherly fashion.

When the executioner prepared to put the sentence into effect, however, the prisoner promptly knocked him down, afterwards doing the same for two of the other members of the court, and kicking the others out of the room. We learned afterwards that he was a cousin of one of the best amateur boxers at Cambridge, and that the latter had coached him up in the gentle art till he was able to hold his own very usefully.

E. TWINING, *Capt.*

SHOOTING ACCIDENTS.

HINTS FOR THE MAN ON THE MOORS.

There are so many possibilities of a gun going wrong or being miscarried that it is a matter for wonder that the heavy list of shooting accidents is not even greater. A man may provide himself with the most expensive and up to date weapon it is possible to purchase, and at the second discharge discover that the gun has burst and that he has lost a hand.

The bursting of a good gun is mostly due to the wad sticking in the barrel. This is the result of carelessness on the part of the man who made the cartridge; he put into it just enough powder to send the shot from the muzzle, but not enough to take the wad out after it. Consequently the wad sticks in the middle of the barrel, and when you fire your next cartridge that barrel bursts.

To guard against this, make it your invariable practice to glance through the barrel before inserting a cartridge.

It doesn't take long, but may save life.

Guns that have been altered are always a source of danger. The fitting of an ejector, for example, upon a gun not built to receive one, has more than once produced the weakness that has meant a burst.

In loading a gun you should bring the stock up to the barrel and not the barrel to the stock. If the cartridge is over sensitive, the jar of the closing of the breech may suffice to explode it; but, provided you keep the muzzle pointing to the ground during the operation of loading, the danger from this source is eliminated.

Not infrequently a gun will go off for no apparent reason. A bit of sand gets into the mechanism of the lock, upsets matters, and even if the weapon is at half-cock a discharge takes place. If the gun is pointing at someone it is not necessary to say what follows.

Of course nobody except a lunatic points a gun at any person intentionally, but when the sportsman suddenly discovers that he wants a pipe or a cigarette, he forgets for a moment that he is carrying a missile of death under his arm or over his shoulder; and so, while he saves the match from being blown out by the wind, he lowers or raises the muzzle till it is on a level and ready to besprinkle someone with pellets.

My own rule—and I advocate it for all—is never to light up unless my gun is empty. I only wish I had the power to enforce it.

Hang-fire sometimes explains an accident. A cartridge appears to miss fire altogether and the gun is lowered, but just as it comes on a level off goes the cartridge. Beware of what you think is a miss-fire.

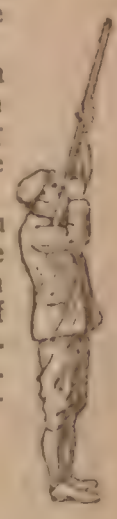
Probably the most common explanation of accidents is the habit the careless sportsman has of clambering through a hedge with a loaded gun in his hand. A spike of barbed wire—even the twig of a briar—is quite sufficient to catch the trigger and discharge the gun. Even the jolt of jumping a ditch will set a gun off, and the rule should be stringently observed that the cartridges be removed before a hedge, a ditch, or even rough ground is negotiated.

Never put your finger on the trigger till the gun is at your shoulder. The excitement and the anxiety to be in time may give your fingers a twitch before you mean it and off goes the gun. Make the rule that the finger touches the trigger just as the butt comes against the shoulder, not sooner.

Shot, especially chilled shot, may ricochet from the branches of a tree and do damage to a person beneath, a fact which is worth remembering when you know that there are people on the other side of the hedge from you.

Above all things never let laziness prompt you to bring a loaded gun into the house. I have been astonished and indignant to see a gun loaded in both barrels propped in the corner of a room where children were playing. A mischievous child, even the domestic cat, may upset the gun and cause a tragedy you will never forget.

G. S. PARDY.



COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

BILL BRODIE'S PUPIL

BY STUART CANNON.

If the Fates had conspired together they could not have chosen a more inopportune moment for bringing home to George Haddon a realisation of his deficiencies.

He was escorting a young lady from a party when a half-tipsy hooligan lurched against him and shouted a gross insult concerning his companion. The obvious and correct thing under the circumstances was for Haddon to have knocked the fellow down. Haddon felt that it was just the thing he would have liked to do, but circumstances restrained him.

A sense of the ridiculous showed him that he would only make a lamentable display of his deficiencies should he attempt to do so, for of boxing he knew nothing; and so he laughed the matter off, apologising to his companion for the roughness of the streets at this late hour, and turning the conversation into another channel.

His thoughts that night wandered back uneasily to the incident described. He was aware of the fact that he was not a coward, but he also knew that he had acted liked one, and he hated himself for it.

"If I could only box!" he muttered many times in the seclusion of his own room, and then it came to him that he had better learn without delay.

In the morning Haddon turned to a daily paper in which he had sometimes observed the card of a boxing instructor. He was glad to find it in on this particular morning. "Bill Brodie, 40, Blank Street," it read, "teacher of the manly art of self-defence. All lessons private. Terms: £2 for twelve lessons."

£2 was rather a serious item to Haddon, but he thought the investment would be a good one if it prevented a recurrence of last night's humiliation, so that evening he presented himself at the house in Blank Street where Bill Brodie lodged.

Now Bill Brodie was a person of ingenuity. He knew that his terms, which worked out at three-and-fourpence a lesson, were low, but he was nevertheless in every case well remunerated, for he followed a very definite system which brought the price to £2, or at the lowest a sovereign, a lesson.

Briefly the methods of Bill were these. He took in advance his full fee for the course of lessons, but mauled his pupils so badly at the first set-to that they did not as a rule come back for another. If they were more than usually courageous they might present themselves a second time, but Bill then made it so very hot for them that they were probably confined to bed when the date of the third lesson arrived.

In a small town Bill's system would have been fatal from a financial standpoint, for there he would have been obliged to rely largely upon the recommendation of his pupils, but the place which Bill honoured with his residence was one of the largest centres in the provinces, and by continually advertising he could always obtain fresh relays of pupils, especially as his charges were considerably less than those of more reputable teachers in the same town.

George Haddon was received at the door by the boxer's landlady and conducted by her to the sitting-room where the lessons were given. The room was furnished in that uncomfortable manner which is generally favoured in those households where lodgers are taken in, but Brodie had given to it some savour of sport by hanging upon its walls certain boxing and hunting prints which were his own private property, and which tended to impress prospective pupils with his standing as a man of sport.

As Haddon looked about him his heart grew heavy. He was not afraid of getting hurt, but he felt out of place. The sporting atmosphere was foreign to him and made him uncomfortable.

He began to think of some young sporting men of his acquaintance whom he had previously despised for the light manner in which they took the serious business of life, and he could not refrain at that moment from envying them.

In the same office as himself, for instance, there was a muscular clerk, Morrison by name, who would have revelled in the anticipation of boxing with such an expert as Bill Brodie. Haddon would have given a year of his life for a single grain of this physical kind of pluck.

Just as he reached this conclusion Bill Brodie entered the room,

He was a very unprepossessing person, but Haddon knew nothing of pugilists and generously imagined him to be a well favoured specimen of the type. Brodie's neck was large, his head was small, his underjaw was immense, his ears had been fattened by many bashings.

Preliminaries were soon arranged. The lessons were to take place three times a week till the twelve were completed, and the two sovereigns changed hands.

"P'raps, Mr. 'Addon," said Bill when these matters had been arranged, "you'd like to 'ave the fust lesson right away?"

Haddon assented to this proposal, stripped off his coat and vest and permitted the boxer to tie a pair of gloves upon his hands.

"Now," said Brodie, when he had donned his own gloves, "the best way to learn boxing is to keep your eyes open and copy me. Don't be afraid of a few 'ard 'its."

With that he proceeded to chivvy his pupil round the room. Gradually his blows increased in force, till at length, warming to his work as it were, he delivered some half-arm hits with all his weight behind them.

Haddon stood his punishment without flinching. He was quite incapable of defending himself, but instinct prompted him to throw up his arms over his face. He imagined, however, that this would not be playing the game, and so, gripping his hands resolutely to his sides, he concentrated his whole attention upon keeping his feet.

Once or twice he failed to do so and crashed to the floor, but on each occasion he blushed foolishly, pulled himself together again, and once more submitted his devoted head to the blows of his instructor.

At last, however, he received on his chin one terrific crash which laid him out senseless. It was some minutes later when he recovered consciousness and found Brodie bending over him, grinning and wiping his face with a sponge which he dipped from time to time into a basin of dirty water. Haddon did his best to disguise the collapse which he was in and, having scrambled into his coat and vest, he allowed his instructor to conduct him to the street door.

"I'll see you back again on Friday, I suppose?" said Brodie leering at him as he closed the door.

The coolness of the night air assisted Haddon to regain his wandering senses although it in no wise lessened the throbbing pains which centred in his head and extended through most of the rest of him. As he thought over what had happened he realised that he had been very nicely swindled. To take another lesson would be suicidal, and the one for which he had paid £2 had taught him nothing.

Next morning when he presented himself at the office he had a swollen lip, an ugly blotch on his cheek and a black eye. With one exception the other men chaffed him unmercifully. That exception was Jack Morrison, the athletic clerk between whom and Haddon there had never been any very great bond of union.

Now, however, Morrison's heart seemed to melt towards the other. It was obvious that Haddon had been fighting with somebody, and, though it was equally apparent that he had got the worst of it, still Morrison held him something of a sportsman in having stood up to it at all. They lunched together that day, and the obvious sympathy of Morrison made Haddon disclose to him the whole facts of the case.

"My dear chap," he said, "have you also been had by that scamp? If you had only asked me about it at the beginning I could have told you exactly what sort of man he was. Why, it's notorious amongst all who take an interest in sport that he always smashes up his pupils in the first and only lesson."

Morrison relapsed into silence, and his face became as thoughtful as his face could. Presently he turned again to his companion.

"Look here," he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do for you. In the first place I'll be delighted for the sake of practice to teach you boxing myself, and in the second I am going to find Bill Brodie another pupil."

"That's rather a terrible revenge to take on your enemies," Haddon replied. "I don't think there is anybody I dislike enough for that."

"You don't quite understand," Morrison continued, "the pupil I am going to send him is Angus Macfee the middleweight champion of Scotland."

Haddon saw the point and grinned joyously though it hurt his lip even to smile.

Two days later a brawny young man called at 40 Blank Street and asked if Mr. Bill Brodie would teach him boxing. Brodie did not quite like the look of his prospective pupil, for though he was presumably devoid of any knowledge of boxing, yet he appeared to be a young man of muscle who would take a deal of knocking out. Nevertheless a £2 fee was not to be despised, and so the money changed hands, the gloves were put on and the fun began.

Angus Macfee, for the newcomer was none other, allowed the instructor to chivvy him round the room in the usual manner, but when the latter began to hit a little hard the blood of Angus rose and he got home some of those delightful hits which have made him famous.

He could, when he liked, tap as gently as anyone, but on this occasion he hit with uncommon vigour and in the most unpleasant places. To be knocked out by being struck on the chin is not a nice experience, but it is sudden and soon over; to be struck on the nose is another matter. This blow delivered with moderate force does not knock you out, and you are left conscious to feel the pain of it as many times as your opponent's glove crashes against the yielding membrane of your nasal organ. It was this blow that Angus Macfee specialised in while dealing with Brodie.

Finally, after the bully had endured this punishment for fifteen minutes, Macfee, considering he had had enough, knocked him out with a well directed hook hit behind the ear.

When Brodie recovered consciousness he observed Macfee sitting beside him smoking and smiling complacently. Brodie groaned and closed his eyes again, fearful lest if he showed signs of returning consciousness he might once more be put through the mill. Pretence was useless, however, for Macfee emptied a basin of water over his head and brought him spluttering to his feet.

"Now," said Augus, for the commercial instinct of his nation asserted itself even in his moment of triumph, "you'll hand me back the £2 you swindled me out of," and, when the money had been duly returned, he continued, "I'm not quite done with you yet. You've got to come to the street door, where there's a few of your former pupils waiting to have a peep at you, and as soon as you've exhibited yourself you'll pack up your things and leave the town. If you stop another day I'll come back and do it all over again."

"I won't stop another day," said Brodie.

THE SHADY SIDE OF FLEET STREET

Let me take you into an alley that runs off Fleet Street, and let us step for a moment into one of the dingiest and most disreputable taverns that could be found in the whole metropolis. Here we shall see a human wreck who has been broken in the storm of modern journalism.

He sits there on a high stool, making devices in the sawdust with the point of a shabby walking-stick. He is not drinking; he cannot afford to do so unless a misguided acquaintance stands treat.

As you look at him with his bent shoulders and lined face, you would call him an old man. He is only thirty-five, but nevertheless he is old for he cannot live much longer. Mark him, and let us leave the stinking air of the beer-shop and return to the street; I will tell you his story.

* * * * * * *

Fifteen years ago he came from his native Yorkshire as a junior reporter on a London paper. I met him in those green days and listened to his impassioned harangues against all forms of government. He was only a boy, and I made allowances for his socialistic enthusiasm, not even smiling when he declared that some day he would edit a great paper and mould public opinion by his eloquence.

Three years later our paths crossed again. The folly of youth had passed over, and he was now a solid young man of sense and judgment. He told me that he had left daily journalism and had become sub-editor of a well-known weekly paper.

The next I heard of him was that he had been dismissed. The paper's popularity was waning, because people were outgrowing the idea on which it was built; the managing director of the company, not understanding the real cause of the decline, thought a change of staff might better things, and he fired the lot.

The young man fought for a time gamely, but he could get no other appointment. He tried free-lancing, but found hunger less productive of ideas than it is reputed to be. Now he has given up the battle. When he hears a scrap of news or a bit of gossip, he flies with it to one of the offices, and the half-crown he gets keeps body and soul together another couple of days.

Some day, he has confessed to me, he is determined to end it all, and it is the anticipation of this, he says, that renders his life bearable.

* * * * * * *

Let us turn down this side street. Seated on the doorstep of an office is a man slightly over middle age. He is dressed in a shabby frock coat, and his boots are badly worn. The office of an important daily is directly opposite, and he sits in full view of the window of the sub-editor's room. He watches that window incessantly, waiting for someone to beckon him up and give him work to do. Now and then the signal comes, just often enough to enable him to live.

Lord Northcliffe's young men pass him as they go to lunch. Mere boys some of them are, but earning their five pounds a week. Five shillings would be a fortune to him, but he smiles contemptuously at them as they walk by.

They have not seen what he has seen. How would they like to be war correspondents and starve through a siege, as he has starved?

What does it matter that the public have forgotten him? He remembers, and, as he sits there in the afternoon sunshine, he dreams that he is once again galloping through smoke and shells, making a brave dash for the nearest telegraph so that his paper may be the first to announce the victory.

And it was.

On a seat on the Embankment we shall find another derelict of this romantic profession. He is always there, studying life, he will tell you, but he is really waiting for courage enough to leap the wall that separates him from the river.

His face is clean but deathly white, and his clothes seem to be well looked after, though they are infinitely shabby.

* * * * * * *

He came down from Oxford when he was a young man, and for a time his name appeared under many brilliant satirical verses in the leading magazines; but his wit was of the kind that demands inspiration and cannot be produced to order, and it did not come in sufficient quantities to give him butter with his bread.

He was offered the post of Paris correspondent by a London paper, and had sense enough to take it; for many years he lived in Paris, and tags of French sometimes slip from his tongue even yet.

After a time the paper changed hands, and the new proprietor appointed a new Paris representative. The Oxford man came back to London, secured work on a magazine, but lost it soon afterwards owing to the old demand for fresh blood.

Then began the old hunt for a vacancy that could not be found. Soon he dropped the weary search and tried to write verses again, but the muse that flowed in luxury refused to answer poverty's call, and now he sits there on the Embankment seat.

An occasional paragraph, and a still less frequent loan from a friend of the old days, keep life in the man who once seemed to have the world of letters at his feet. PETER GILCHRIST.

HE SHOOTS BARE-HEADED.

Lord Iveagh, the brewer, has a superstition that he can't hit a bird if he has a hat on, so he walks bare-headed on the moors.

Once, and once only, has he ever been known to wear a head-covering and carry a gun at the same time. That was when he went shooting with Prince Adolphus of Teck. From an ordinary Scotch mist, the weather thickened till it rained cats and dogs, and the prince insisted on knotting his handkerchief at the four corners and putting it on Lord Iveagh's head; but, strangely enough, not a bird fell to his lordship's gun all that afternoon.

"It's this wretched thing that's done it," he said, when he returned home, and, taking the dripping handkerchief from his head, he gave himself the satisfaction of dropping it into the fire that blazed in the gunroom.

FIGHTING SLEEP.

The time comes to everyone who has to pass examinations when he must sit up later than usual. Months before it was all nicely planned out, but work was neglected, and now some honest cramming must be done. The one thing necessary is to find a way of fighting sleep.

The health will not suffer irretrievably if the usual rest is cut down by a couple of hours each night for a few weeks, but it imagines it will, and forces sleep upon its owner even as he pores over his books. Coffee is the favourite remedy, but, though it is effective, you have to keep on increasing the amount till it is likely to harm you.

A basin of cold water is better. Every time you feel sleepy bathe your hands and face in it. Here there is no possibility of injurious after-effect.

The great Palmerston used to do his private correspondence at night, after spending a hard day conducting the business of the nation. It was his custom to write his letters on the top of a cabinet which was so high that he had to stand beside it.

"When I sit down at night I always drop asleep," he confessed to a friend; "but it's all right when I work standing. If I fall down that wakes me."

SPORTING AILMENTS.

ATHLETES REPAIRED WHILE YOU WAIT.

When a footballer is kicked on the knee and the cartilage is slightly misplaced, he will be unwise if he attemps to doctor himself or allows his trainer or his friends to do so. His obvious duty is to take a cab to the nearest surgeon of repute. There are, however, many minor accidents which the sportsman may readily deal with himself.

Heading the list must come strained muscles. A strain may be due to a sudden jerk, to fatigue, or to overtraining. Its cure is summed up in three words "Rest and rubbing."

Never does a man strain a muscle at a game without someone telling him he ought to keep moving, as otherwise the injured muscle will become stiff. Though almost excused by its antiquity, this notion is entirely erroneous. The muscle should be kept flexible by motion, but the motion should come from the outside in the form of massage.

One of the most effective massages possible is the rush of water from a cold tap.

In a bath or in a scullery a tap can usually be found where there is a fall of several feet. Turn it full on and place the injured ankle or wrist at the foot of the stream of water. In cold weather a certain amount of numbness will ensue, and it is advisable to have at hand a basin of hot water in which the limb exposed to the cold stream may from time to time be dipped, thus restoring the circulation.

The art of massaging with the fingers could only be demonstrated practically. It is sufficient to say here that all amateur rubbing should be done with the tips of the fingers and lightly.

A good emergency embrocation with which to rub a sprain can be made from equal parts of turpentine and any oil that may be handy. A little methylated spirit added to this compound will make its action quicker. The object of the embrocation is to draw the blood to the surface and thus relieve the muscles, while the massaging necessary to its application has a directly beneficial effect on the muscles themselves.

Varicose veins are a warning to the sportsman to be careful. In themselves they are not serious, but when these distended veins appear on the leg they are all too frequently accompanied by similar enlargements internally, and it is from the internal varicose veins that danger arises. The cause is usually functional weakness of the heart or overstrain, and the athlete who observes these veins upon him should have himself medically examined before he continues his sport.

When in doubt always see your doctor.

Blisters on the hands may be prevented by rubbing the palms with methylated spirit, which hardens the skin and makes it able to withstand friction. This tip should be useful to those who row, golf, or play hockey.

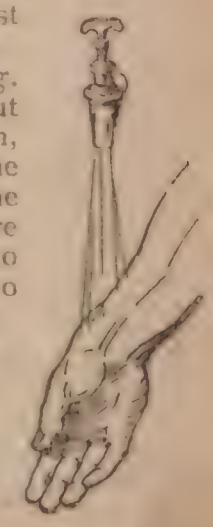
Cuts should be attended to at once, and, if they have been sustained by a fall, they should be thoroughly washed; do not be afraid to use soap in the process.

The sportsman should always have somewhere within reach a leaf of court plaster or a small bottle of collodion such as is used in the manufacture of photographic plates. This will stop a cut temporarily, but, if there is any suspicion of dirt having got in, the wound should be poulticed and dressed with antiseptics as soon as you reach home.

I have never been an alarmist, and I do not propose becoming one in my old age, but I cannot warn the sportsman too strongly against neglecting a wound or leaving it exposed.

Boils frequently accompany hard training. Why they should do so is not very apparent, but the fact remains. Many trainers poultice them, with the result that the microbes causing the boils breed luxuriously under the warmth of the poultice, and a crop of boils is the result where there was only one before. The right way to treat a boil is to rub an antiseptic ointment into it. Such for example as boric acid or carbolic.

E. L. ROBERTSON, M.B., Ch.M.



COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By

G. C. STABLES.

Close to the station of Wokingdale there stands a factory where chicken coops once were made.

The place was got up with every convenience, for the promoters of the business fully anticipated success. They had a siding constructed from the up line so that trucks might be loaded with their goods in the factory itself. Failure, however, was the sole reward of the investors whose money had been sunk in the concern, and for many years the factory, much to our regret, stood empty.

I say to our regret, because in the old, busy days the factory benefited the railway, and because from time to time it was necessary for me to arrange for the siding to be used, and this task helped to relieve the monotony of my life as stationmaster at Wokingdale.

For years the rails of the siding had remained covered with rust, and a fence had been constructed running across it and dividing the yard of the factory from the railway. The siding itself had not been taken up, for we still hoped that some other company might rent the place.

At length our expectations were realised, but only to a limited degree. The ground landlord had bought the place on the failure of the previous tenants, and he now wrote to us to say that he had succeeded in letting it to a foreign syndicate which proposed building motor cars there, and he took the opportunity of informing us so that we might make overtures to the new tenants concerning the carrying of their materials.

I understand that our manager wrote to the effect that we should be delighted to serve them and trusted to have their patronage, but I know that we never got any.

The syndicate seemed to be a most extraordinary organisation altogether. One car used to come in and out of the place but that was the only motor I ever saw there. The workmen were foreigners, and they greatly puzzled the people of the village.

We had all hoped that the new industry would help local trade, but it did not. The workpeople lived inside the factory, and their supplies must have come down from London by motor, for they bought nothing in Wokingdale.

My own chief disappointment lay in the fact that they made no use whatsoever of the railway. Once or twice a traction engine with a couple of heavy trucks was seen to make its way into the factory yard, presumably with the materials necessary for the building of motor cars, materials which we had hoped we should have the benefit of carrying.

Our disappointment over this matter was still fresh when we received news that the king and queen of Spain were coming to Windsor, and would consequently pass through our station. They would not, of course, stop at Wokingdale, but we should have the excitement and responsibility of seeing to their safe passage over our section of the line, and that was always something to be thankful for, as the event would form a landmark in a somewhat drab existence.

We had the news of their purposed visit about a month before it was actually to come off, so we set about making the station look spick and span, and planning how we might arrange a little decoration in the hope that it would catch the eye of our royal visitor and his English wife.

"If only it had been my luck to have them stop here," I remarked one evening to my better-half.

"Well, she replied, "you never know. It might be that some little mishap occurs that would oblige their train to pull up at Wokingdale."

"God forbid!" I replied. "Any kind of mishap to the royal train would be the last thing I should wish for."

The days passed on till at length there was but a week between us and the expected journey. One evening about this time the booking clerk came into my room with a face as white as death.

"You may think me a fool, sir," he said, "but I'll swear I saw the ghost of an engine on the line to-night close to the station here. It was showing no lights, and, what is still more strange, it was not a type of locomotive that I have ever seen here before. It was more like the big, top-heavy engines they use on some of the other companies' lines."

The booking clerk was a steady man, but I feared that on this occasion he must have been drinking, and had seen some shadow that had given him a good scare and sobered him up. I said as much to him, and he went away to his office, half convinced that I was right.

On the following evening, however, one of the porters came to me with a similar story. He had seen the engine on the line, he said, and his description tallied with that given by the booking clerk. According to his story the phantom engine had been running slowly along the up line about two hundred yards east of our station. He assured me that he had watched it for a good while—in fact till it was out of sight.

I began to feel uneasy about the matter. I could not suppose that my men were intentionally deceiving me, for I am not given to encouraging foolery of that description.

On the following evening I spent a good deal of time walking about the platform. I would not admit that I credited the story of the booking clerk and the porter, but still I thought I might as well keep an eye on the line east of the station.

Towards nine o'clock I beheld a sight which rooted me to the spot. An engine was coming slowly towards our station, and that too on the up line.

It was precisely the type of engine which had been described to me, and my astonishment was the greater for I knew that our company did not possess any of that kind. It came slowly in my direction till it was about a hundred yards off; then it stopped and backed away till I lost sight of it.

I dashed to the telegraph office and wired my colleague at Brackenham, the next station to the east, concerning what I had seen. I asked him to keep a sharp look out on the line and see whether this engine passed him or not.

He telegraphed back that he had himself been on the point of communicating with me concerning this very circumstance. He had not personally observed the engine, but several of his men had done so. It had never passed through his station, he said, but had been seen on the line between there and Wokingdale.

It seemed impossible now that the engine could be a mere optical illusion, and I requested the Brackenham stationmaster to send a man along the line in my direction while I myself would proceed in his. If I and his messenger could not find the engine it would indeed be a mystery. To this proposal he agreed, and accordingly I set off down the line.

After walking for half-an-hour, I met the messenger from Brackenham, but to my astonishment he assured me that he had not encountered the engine.

Here then was a problem. What had become of the mysterious locomotive? It had not passed through our station nor through Brackenham. I had seen it with my own eyes on the line, and yet we had not been able to find it.

The evening of the royal visit at length arrived. King Alfonso's train was timed to pass through Wokingdale at 9.30, and from the moment it left London we were posted up by telegraph as to its position on the line, so that we might keep everything clear and ensure a safe journey.

Under ordinary circumstances I should not have had the least uneasiness, but after what I had witnessed on that memorable night I could not suppress a certain amount of anxiety. Ghosts I had never believed in, but my scepticism had received a shock. If an engine could appear on the up line and vanish again, could it not as easily appear on the down line and possibly cause a mishap to the royal train?

As I paced the platform I received a message that the royal special had left the junction ten miles to the east, and might be expected at Wokingdale in about fifteen minutes' time. My next intimation would be from Brackenham that the train had passed through there.

I looked along the up line wondering whether the spectral engine would be visible again. As far as I could see the rails were clear, but something large and black loomed at the side of them in a position where I had never observed any shadow before.

I buttoned my coat and raced along the track at top speed. When I was some fifty yards on this side of the motor factory, I pulled up in astonishment. Men were removing the wooden fence which had been erected across the siding, and a gigantic engine was standing just beyond them, throbbing gently.

As I watched, the fence was lifted to one side and the engine backed through on to the up line. It came in my direction for a few yards, then it stopped and set off at full speed eastwards.

I had to act immediately, and I did so with some satisfaction. The men I had seen were of flesh and blood, and the engine I might therefore infer was of steel, and so, with all fear of the supernatural removed, I dashed back to my own station and set the telegraph in motion.

I could see now the explanation of the whole thing. The engine must have been built by the supposed motor syndicate, and must be designed to wreck the royal train. It was on the up line, and the only points by which it could cross to the down line—that on which the approaching train was running—were on the other side of Brackenham.

Presumably the scoundrels would have someone posted there to wrench the points to the correct position with a crowbar; my one hope was that I might communicate with my colleague at Brackenham in time, and, heaven be praised! I succeeded in doing so.

My message reached him not a moment too soon. He gave instructions to his signalman to switch the royal train on to the up line by another set of points away to the east. Meanwhile he saw by personal examination that the points nearest me had been wedged to one side by the scoundrels who had conceived this vile scheme. He left them as they were, returned to his station and awaited events.

In a moment the phantom engine flashed past him, and he saw that there was no one at the throttle. It took the points correctly and swept along the down line, but by this time the royal train was safely on the other. A message was flashed to the next station, and the runaway engine was guided into a blind siding, where it crashed against the buffers and hurled itself down the enbankment.

The royal train pulled up at Brackenham, and the king and his queen learnt what had happened. They insisted on stopping at Wokingdale also, and they thanked me for saving their lives, although my having done that was, I am sure, wholly a matter of luck.

Next day the police raided the factory, and found that the only work that had ever been carried out by the syndicate had been the construction of the phantom locomotive. This had been assembled from various parts, conveyed in cases from abroad. None of the gang was caught, but we had at least the satisfaction of knowing that the scheme which had cost them so much time, money and trouble had miscarried absolutely.

FITNESS AND FOOD.

The Nutritive Value of Currants and Bananas.

The dependence of fitness upon food is so obvious as to need no argument, but the selection of foods which shall yield the most nutriment—that is to say, the greatest proportion of body-building to waste products—is always a matter of interest and importance. The consensus of medical opinion is that we, as a nation, eat too much meat, which is not only costly, but does not yield the same proportions of nutriment as many vegetables and fruits.

The sustaining qualities of certain vegetable foods are well known, but they are not universally liked, because of the difficulty in digesting them; moreover, they are deficient in the all-important constituent of sugar. Haricot beans and lentils, for instance, only contain a very small percentage of sugar, though their nutritive value is high.

Now sugar is absolutely essential to athletes and to workers who require to use their muscles. The muscular system of the body feeds largely upon sugar, and so imperative is the demand of the muscular system for sugar and starch that, if they are not taken in the food, the organism will produce them from the materials that are consumed by a truly marvellous chemical process, the secret of which is unknown to science. Moreover, the more sugar consumed, and used up in bodily energy, the less is the need for the use of albuminous or tissue-building substances.

SUGAR AND STARCH.

Now this sugar and starch is found in the largest proportions in currants and bananas, the simple cheap fruits that are so common, yet whose excellent dietetic value is so often overlooked. Currants, which, as we know, are the small grape of Greece, dried in the sun, contain over 70 per cent. of sugar substances. Their analysis yields the following proportions per cent.:

Water	24.2
Tissue-building substances	3.2
Sugar substances	70.0
Fats and oils	0.5
Natural salts	2.1
	100.0

Thus nearly two-thirds of the currant are sugar substances, which are so necessary to the man of muscular energy, besides a very useful proportion of tissue-building (or albuminous) substances, and the unusually large quantity of natural salts which are so wholesome.

A SIMPLE TEST.

If you really want to find out how valuable currants are as an article of food just take a pound with you the next time you are on a long walk, munching them as you go along the road. You will find that you want very little other food.

Physical Culturists ought to see to it that currants take a large place in their dietary. Their sustaining properties are, as we have shown, without question, and they have the enormous advantage of being cheap and obtainable everywhere. Moreover, they possess the still further advantage that they are most easily digested. Properly cooked currants will be digested by the average person in good health in about 2½ hours, whereas boiled beef takes 4 hours 15 minutes in digestion, and boiled mutton 3 hours 15 minutes.

A FEW RECIPES.

It will probably be useful here to append a few recipes for currants. First of all, we will give the old-fashioned, but still undervalued, currant and suet pudding, and it will be seen that the combination of its ingredients makes an almost complete food. The ingredients are: Four oz. beef suet, 8 oz. flour, 2 oz. sugar, 2 oz. currants, 1 egg, 1 level teaspoonful baking powder, a pinch of salt. The best method of making this pudding is as follows: Remove the skin from the suet and chop it very finely. Put it in a basin with the flour, sugar, currants, baking powder and salt. Beat up the egg with a little milk and stir in. Work into a smooth paste and fill into small, well-greased timbale or dariole moulds. Cover each with buttered paper and steam for about an hour. Turn out and serve with a sweet sauce.

The analysis of the currant showed that its percentage of fats were small. In the above mixture the suet supplies the needful quantity of fat, and the egg supplies an additional quantity of albuminous, or body-building, material.

Another excellent way of using currants is in rock cakes. Take ½ lb. flour, 1 egg, 3 oz. butter or dripping, 2 oz. sugar, 1 oz. mixed peel, 2 oz. currants, 1 teaspoonful baking powder, a little grated nutmeg, not quite ½ gill of milk, a pinch of salt. The method of making rock cakes is to sift the flour into a basin, add the salt and a grate of nutmeg, rub the butter or dripping into the flour, and mix well; then shred the peel and add this with the currants, the sugar, nutmeg, salt and baking powder to the flour. Beat up the egg with the milk and mix gradually with the dry ingredients into a fairly stiff mixture. Put this in rough heaps on to a greased baking sheet, and bake in a fairly hot oven about twenty minutes.

These are but two of the hundreds of ways in which the nutritious and wholesome currant can be utilised as food in the most palatable manner.

THE VIRTUES OF THE BANANA.

Now as to the banana. Of late years we have heard a great deal about this excellent fruit, but we cannot hear too much, because the more widely it is used the better it will be for all, as bananas, like currants, are not only nutritious but cheap. To show how it differs from the currant in its chemical composition we give a similar analysis showing the various parts per cent.:

Water	73.1
Tissue-building substances	5.0
Sugar substances	20.0
Fats and oils	0.6
Natural salts	1.3
	100.0

It will thus be seen that, whilst bananas contain less sugar, they on the other hand contain more nitrogenous, or tissue-building, substances than currants. The high percentage of water is because bananas are received fresh and not dried; but even so, they contain much less water than apples or plums, the percentage of water in the latter fruits being 84.9 and 84.5 per cent. respectively.

The nutritious value of bananas has been proved over and over again by athletes.

IRREFUTABLE TESTIMONY.

Athletes long ago used them during the performance of feats of endurance, not only because they are nutritious, but because they are most easily digested, the time required for raw bananas being less than 70 minutes. During the Stock Exchange walking race from London to Brighton, on May 1, 1904, there was a universal demand for bananas, and a great outcry in the press because the supply available at the various shops along the road was too small for the big demand made by the competitors, and in the recent Marathon race many of the runners ate bananas as they went along. And George Allen, the famous vegetarian athlete, will, on his present walk from Land's End to John o' Groats, practically live on bananas and bread and butter.

HOW TO COOK BANANAS.

Although bananas are a fruit popular with all classes in this country they are mostly looked upon as a luxury, like other fruits, and not as a staple foodstuff, like bread or meat, as they could be regarded with benefit to the race. And the cooking of bananas is altogether neglected. If the delicious dishes which can be made with bananas were more widely known they would certainly be more widely used. They may be used either as sweets or savouries; and, roasted and served in the gravy of roast beef, they are most delicious. Here, however, are one or two dishes which can be tried:

Banana salad (savoury) is made as follows: Take three rather unripe bananas, mayonnaise sauce, one cos or two cabbage lettuces, and two tomatoes. Trim and wash the lettuces well and drain on a clean cloth, break the lettuce into small pieces and place in a salad bowl, with the bananas peeled and cut into slices. Pour over about 1½ gills seasoned mayonnaise sauce. Skin the tomatoes, cut into thin slices, and range them on top of the salad.

Fried bananas (also a savoury) to be served as garnish, with fillets of beef or cutlets, or served as a side-dish, is made as follows: Remove the skin from six not over-ripe bananas, cut each in quarters, or half lengthways, season with salt and pepper, or Paprika, then dip each in milk, then in flour. Fry them in very hot clarified fat to a golden colour, take up, drain on a cloth or paper, and serve hot. If served on a separate dish, garnish with sprigs of fresh or fried parsley.

If bananas are used in this way they render a much smaller quantity of meat necessary, to the benefit both of the digestion and the pocket.

CANINE WICKEDNESS.

HOW TO REFORM A DOG'S CHARACTER.

Some dogs, like some people, spoil a respectable character by one outstanding fault.

I remember having a retriever which would ransack the henhouse and the barn in search of eggs. There was much wonderment as to how the hens' output was declining, and we were just beginning to accuse them of gross neglect of their duties when I happened to observe the retriever in the very act of eating an egg.

An old friend of mine, well versed in doggy lore, assured me that this was a vice of which no dog could be broken, but he was a good dog in other respects so I determined to make the attempt.

I blew an egg, sealed up one end, and filled the empty shell with mustard, about the same consistency as one uses at table. Then I stuck a piece of white court-plaster over the other end and placed the egg in the henhouse. The retriever discovered it, and came to me in great disgust, licking his lips and trying to scratch the inside of his mouth with his forefeet. It was not sympathy I gave him, but he never sinned in the same way again.

Another naughty dog which I once possessed was an Irish terrier which would chase any fast going vehicle. Cyclists he left alone, but bakers' and butchers' carts he would pursue in spite of my loudest whistling. I remonstrated with him when he had finally tired himself out and had returned to me, but he seemed not to understand what I was checking him for.

It is essential in punishing a dog that the penalty should be inflicted immediately and, if possible, during the commission of the offence. I therefore shouted to the local butcher one day as the terrier went yapping beside him to let it have his whip. I imagine from the result that it was only fear of offending that had prevented the butcher from doing so long since, for he gave it a sound drubbing with the keenest satisfaction. After that it still showed symptoms of wanting to chase carts, but it always kept back when I told it to do so.

A dog which is inveterately fond of fighting can be broken from it only in one way—let him meet his match. A huge bull-terrier of mine ceased to be pugnacious after he tried to wipe the road with an under-sized bulldog, and himself received the wiping. Previous to that he was a terror to the neighbourhood; after it, a lamb in docility.

A dog can best be broken from stealing on the principle I have described in the case of the eggs. Make him up something unpleasant inside something else that looks nice. Do not offer it to him but let him steal it in the usual way. The head of a thistle placed inside a hollowed out cream cake cured one of the most inveterate thieves I have ever known.

One of the commonest and most objectionable faults is dirtiness in the house. Before resorting to forcible arguments with the dog make sure you take him out often enough. If neglect on your part is not responsible, then you must endeavour to catch him in the act. If you punish him long after the commission of the offence, even if you take him to the spot where it was committed, he does not appear able to grasp what the trouble is all about.

There is no need to give a dog a terrific thrashing when you catch him offending in this way. I know that many owners say that a dog will remember one good thrashing all his life, but I am inclined to think that in this respect the canine memory is short. He is more likely to lose affection for you than to mend his ways. Let the punishment be slight, a smack or two with the open hand, but let it be administered at the proper moment.

There is one form of vice which I do not think can be cured; it is killing or hunting other animals. The dog that has once tasted blood, whether poultry or sheep, cannot be persuaded to return to respectable habits. The only thing to do is to have him shot. E. JAMESON CLARK.

THE WHY OF CYCLING ACCIDENTS

Caution is true valour.—EURIPIDES.

Toe-clips are amongst the most prolific causes of accidents to cyclists. As the Wood Plumbton coroner remarked the other day, when he was sitting on a fatal accident which had occurred, "they put a cyclist at a critical moment in the position of a man who tries to jump into the air with somebody clinging to his ankles."

Toe-clips are useless and abominable. Not only is it difficult to drag the feet clear of them in the event of accident, but if you have clips on your pedals you will some day neglect inserting your toes in them and will allow the clip to remain on the underside of the pedal. Turn a corner sharply with a clip so placed, and it will grate upon the ground and probably throw you.

Side slips are responsible for many serious mishaps. When you find yourself on a greasy road, and know that a side slip is probable, throw your weight on the pedals instead of on the saddle. The centre of gravity will then be low and your stability much greater.

ONE BRAKE WRONG.

In the old days of fixed wheels many bicycles were unprovided with brakes, but since the free wheel has become universal brakes have, of course, become essential even for the most reckless rider. Those who court accident, however, allow one brake to get out of action, in the belief that the other will be sufficient for all emergencies.

It is just when the emergency occurs that the one sound brake gives out. Should you be unfortunate enough to find yourself careering headlong down a hill with both brakes refusing to act, you should press the sole of your foot against the tyre of your front wheel. This is a simple thing to do and offers no difficulty to any cyclist but a beginner.

If, however, there is a mudguard on your front wheel, the best thing you can do is either to throw yourself off or steer into the hedge as soon as you discover that you are helpless. It is better to take the impact at ten miles an hour than to be pitched into something when you are at the foot of the hill, travelling between twenty and thirty miles an hour. I am supposing in this instance that there is some obstruction at the foot of the hill. If the road is perfectly clear and straight you may be well advised to hang on, steer steady and trust to luck.

HEADLONG DOWN A HILL.

It is worth remembering that a brake is sometimes acting though it does not grip the wheel properly. You may imagine that your brakes are quite useless, whereas if you press them down hard they may have a certain amount of retarding effect, sufficient perhaps to slow your machine down and enable you to get off. Whether the brakes are exerting this effect is a problem that you must decide, and that quickly. If they are not reducing your pace, act as I have already suggested.

Riding with several other cyclists is another source of danger. The cycle club, with its members one behind the other for a quarter of a mile, may meet disaster from one single cause. Let the first man fall, and the others heap themselves on top of him. The thing has happened again and again

If you cannot see distinctly in front of you use the utmost caution. Darkness and fog are death traps to the cyclist.

A Tilston cyclist was riding not very long ago near Kidnal, when he encountered a dense volume of smoke coming from a heap of smouldering rubbish in a roadside garden. Neglecting caution, he rode at speed through the smoke and came into violent and fatal collision with the shaft of a vehicle which was standing at the other side of the cloud. The horse had refused to face the smoke, and the vehicle was waiting there to smash up any cyclist who might be uncautious enough to neglect slowing down.

The safest plan in regard to traffic is to suppose that it is in the charge either of fools or of men of criminal recklessness. Always suppose when you are rounding a corner that there is a wild butcher boy driving towards you on the wrong side.

The chances of your encountering a vehicle at a corner are about one in a hundred, but, as you turn many hundreds of corners in the course of a few weeks, it stands to reason that you will also run the risk of colliding with many vehicles unless you go slow and ring your bell.

OVERTAKING.

There lurks danger also in passing vehicles. In towns the driver will indicate with his whip which way he means to turn, but in the country it is unusual for drivers to give any such warning, and Hodge in charge of a waggon may draw right across your track without giving you an indication of his intentions. Under such circumstances you will be wise to turn into the side road with him till you can slow down and jump off.

If you are behind one vehicle and see another coming towards you you will do well to remain behind the first till the second has safely passed by. With motors this is a very necessary precaution, for it is difficult to form an accurate estimate of their speed when you are looking at them front on, and it may easily happen that the two vehicles will come side by side just when you are between them.

It is tempting when you are riding against a head wind to use a motor car as a wind shield, but the practice is most dangerous. Even if the motorist is aware of your presence behind him, and is willing that you should take advantage of the car, the mechanism may break down, the car come to a standstill, and you be smashed against the back of it.

TRAM TRAPS.

Every cyclist has encountered the tram-line danger. The rails are supposed to have a groove about one inch wide, but where they have been subjected to extra wear and tear, as at corners, this groove widens out to as much as an inch and a half. Woe betide the unhappy cyclist with a narrow tread tyre who gets into one of these traps. In crossing a tram-line you are perfectly safe doing it at a big angle, and very foolhardy if you do it at a small one. If you are obliged by the crowded state of the streets to take a tram-line at a fine angle you have always one alternative left you—jump off.

There is nothing derogatory in jumping off your machine when you find yourself in difficulties, and it is the false pride of remaining in the saddle under all circumstances that leads to many accidents. M. HOBBS

STEADY STEAD.

Mr. W. T. Stead, editor of the "Review of Reviews," is a remarkable man in many ways.

One of his peculiarities is to wear a trouser button in the lapel of his coat. He does this as a protest against all forms of honorary decoration.

"I have created an order for myself," he once said, "and the emblem of it is the only thing in the way of distinction that I shall ever wear."

The Tsar was much pleased with the assistance Mr. Stead gave him in remodelling his Duma, and wished to confer on him one of the Russian crosses.

"I shall accept the honour, your Majesty," replied Mr. Stead, "on one condition—that you will in return consent to wear the insignia of the order I myself have established."

"What is the insignia like?" asked the Tsar.

"It is a trouser button," replied Mr. Stead.

And the Russian cross was not further pressed upon him.

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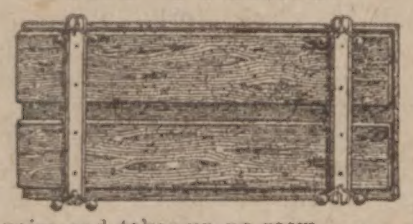
10/6  **10/6**

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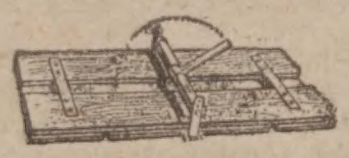
25/-  **25/-**

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A WEEKLY FEATURE.

Conducted by
CAPTAIN L. H. SAUNDERS.

STOCKS OR SOFT COLLARS.

Often have I craved a blessing upon the head of the man who invented the soft collar. They are an inestimable comfort; but they have, like many other good things, the somewhat serious drawback of not being beautiful. I have yet to meet the man who looks his best in a flannel collar.

The same cannot be said of the hunting stock. Whether its material is white or blue matters little. It sits more closely to the neck than a linen collar, it is more trim than a flannel one, and if a man does not look well wearing one he is never likely to do so.

But the hunting stock has a fault even greater than that of the flannel collar. It looks very nice when you have newly tied it, but the tie part has a trick of riding up in front of the collar section and presenting the very acme of untidiness. You may fix matters by fastening the tie down to your shirt with a multitude of safety pins, but such a procedure entails too much trouble to meet the taste of the average man.

The stock is eminently comfortable, and what we chiefly require is some improvement in its shaping whereby when once tied it would remain in position indefinitely. Contrivances have been invented to meet this end, but they are for the most part too expensive to make them worth while.

SHOES OR BOOTS?

To my own mind shoes never seem quite so smart as boots. I know that I am running counter to the opinions of the moment in this respect, but my view is shared by many others. Shoes seldom fit the foot quite so well as boots and you will generally see at the top of a shoe a gaping space in which you might thrust a pocket-handkerchief. Another objection to my mind is this: the shoe breaks up the line of the foot and ankle and thus draws undue attention to the feet, which are seldom things of surpassing beauty.

On the other hand I should be the last to condemn the wearers of shoes. Let them choose for themselves, say I. To brand the man in shoes as a fop is ridiculous, for the shoe has several claims to consideration. It allows free access of air to the foot, though it permits dust to reach the skin also. Its main advantage, however, is its lightness.

BEST GIRL AS CRITIC.

A man can have no better critic in the matter of his clothes than his sweetheart. It is possible for me to lay down general rules as to which colours best suit the sallow man and which become him of the ruddy countenance, but there are individual exceptions and variations to every law, and those readers who find it difficult to get clothes to suit them, ought to call in the kindly offices of their best girls.

A woman studies colour and figure from her infancy, and though she would probably be very far wrong if you asked her opinion in a matter concerning masculine fashions, still her advice is infallible where the problem is merely one of taste.

Women know nothing about the number of buttons there ought to be on a vest, but they will tell you whether a red vest or a green one best suits a certain individual.

FIELD BOOTS.

One occasionally sees a man on the moors wearing field boots, but though various attempts have been made to bring them into public favour they have never caught on to any great extent. You know the boots I refer to, of course; they are somewhat similar to an ordinary riding boot, only they are cut to fit the leg and ankle exactly, and they are laced up the front.

Their fault is not expense, for you can get a pair for 23s., which is a low price when you remember that you are getting a good pair of boots and leggings combined. Their chief drawback is that very soon they stretch, so that the legs of them cannot be drawn as tight as formerly but begin to show transverse wrinkles about the ankles. Another fault is that they do not give you that freedom about the ankle that you get with boots and leggings. Add to this the fact that the upper four inches or so do not unlace, and the boots consequently take some getting into.

For motor-cycling they are not bad, but for walking—no thanks!

COLLAR SIZES.

Once upon a time I wore collars 2¾ inches high, size 16. That was in my callow days. With increase of years I determined to lower the height of my collar and bought some 2½ inches high in the same old size.

I was astonished to find that these collars were much too wide for me, and the next time I visited my hosier I asked him whether he had not made some mistake. It was then that I learnt that one must vary the width of collar with the height. The 16 collar seemed exactly my size when the height was 2¾ inches, but as soon as a little was cut off from the height it left a space so that all beholders might see down my neck. The remedy was, of course, to take size 15½ with the lower collar.

This matter I daresay many of my readers have solved for themselves, but I mention it in order that those who have not yet made the experiment may save themselves needless expense. If a man proposes changing the height of his collar let him buy one of the type his fancy dictates, so that he may try it on and see whether it is exactly the thing he requires. It is provoking to be landed with half-a-dozen collars which do not suit you.

GLOVE CLEANING.

The professedly washable glove may be treated in the way its name implies, but most other kinds should be sent to the cleaner when they are dirty.

There is one exception—the buckskin or imitation buckskin glove. This may be cleaned in exactly the same way as the buckskin strappings of riding breeches. Stains should be sponged out of them, and they should then be rubbed with the brown pipeclay balls which bootmakers supply.

When they are perfectly dry they should be crushed in the hand till they are flexible and the dust should then be gently beaten out of them.

Indiarubber, by the way, may be used to good effect on a light pair of gloves that have just begun to show signs of wear or may happen to have been soiled in one particular spot only, but this is not a treatment that one can advocate when the whole of the surface of the glove is dirty.

SWEATING FEET.

If you are the unhappy possessor of perspiring feet your boot bill will run into higher figures than would otherwise be the case. The lining, whether of cloth or leather, will inevitably rot away with the action of sweat, and in the case of thin brown boots the sweat may even show itself on the surface.

Sweat is about the easiest thing to remove imaginable. All you have to do is to put the article saturated with sweat in cold water for a little time and it will immediately come out. If you come home with perspiring feet, it is an excellent plan to wash your boots out with cold water before putting them on the trees.

MONEY OR KNACK?

You can't dress well without spending money; I must set that down as an axiom, but I am convinced that knack is just as important as cash, if not more so.

For the man who is dressing at a minimum of cost the faculty of careful selection is all important. Let me draw your attention, my reader, to your own past sins in the matter of buying. How often have you been persuaded by voluble salesmen into purchasing ties which you became tired of after a week or so?

The possession of knack eliminates such wasteful purchases. The skilful and economical dresser buys nothing but what will be eminently useful as long as it lasts.

Knack like most things can be cultivated. It comes from bitter experience very often. You are disappointed in certain things which you have chosen, and you avoid committing the same errors again. A quicker way to acquire knack, and withal a cheaper, is to study the clothes of those whom you know to be possessed of the faculty of dressing well.

Above all things, see that the man from whom you are taking tips is not spending more than you yourself can afford. To endeavour to copy a man who spends £50 a year, if you are only spending £20, is to garb yourself in showy imitations. Let your model of knack, therefore, be someone of indisputable taste and of an income about the same size as your own.

TRICKS OF DRESS.

Good clothes cost money, but little tricks cost nothing. Hence we find them adopted by many young men who desire to appear smart without first paying the piper.

Army men are compelled to wear their handkerchiefs inside their cuffs, as the designers of uniforms have not taken pockets into account. The army man unconsciously carries this habit with him into civil life, and you may observe an officer in mufti extract his handkerchief from his jacket sleeve when he wants it. Costless, easy, this trick has been done to death by those who have studiously observed the army man, and the habit of wearing the handkerchief in the sleeve is now therefore being tabooed by most officers when they are wearing mufti.

Another trick which has happily outlived its popularity was that of wearing the wrists of the gloves turned down over the hands, instead of having them buttoned up. The origin of this I have never been able to discover, but I imagine some great man must have been seen wearing his gloves in this way; possibly he had cut his wrist, or he may have been in too great a hurry to button them up.

COPYING THE KING.

Wearing the trousers turned up even on dry days is another little trick. I have known men who have been absurdly prejudiced against this, and I have even heard of one banker sending a notice to all his clerks forbidding them to wear their trousers turned up within the building at all. The origin of this particular custom I do happen to know. One day the King, as Prince of Wales, attended a race meeting at Kempton Park. There had been a shower of rain and the grass in the Paddock got wet, so he turned up his trousers. Presently the sun came out and the grass dried again, but he forgot to fold them back. When he returned to town he happened to be seen in the railway station with his trousers still turned up, and the fashion thus unintentionally set was quickly adopted by all and sundry.

Wearing the foot button of the waistcoat unfastened is another wheeze, and a perfectly sensible one too. You will see its utility best if you have on a white waistcoat that has been newly ironed. If you button it all the way and then sit down your vest gets creased at the foot. On the other hand if you leave the foot button unfastened, the two sides of the vest are then free to give with the bending of the body and there is little or no creasing.

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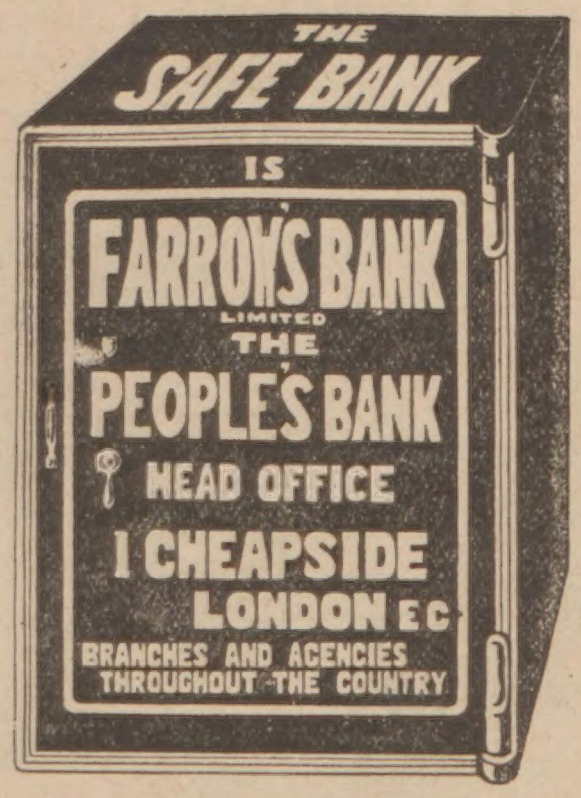

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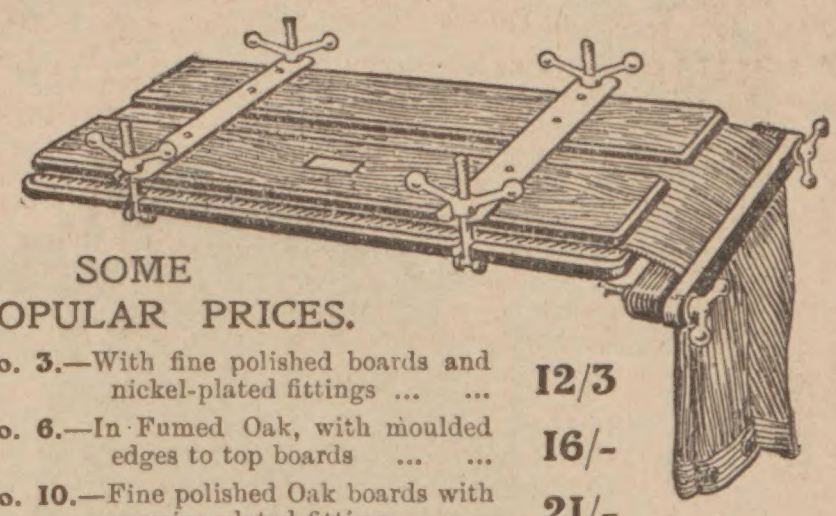

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